終わりのセラフ

Seraph of the end

1

一瀬グレン、16歳の破滅

鏡貴也

TAKAYA KAGAMI

ILLUSTRATION

山本ヤマト

YAMATO YAMAMOTO

講談社ラノベ文庫

Prologue - About the Spring of this World

When I was a kid, I thought that any kind of dream I had would be granted.
Being with the person I like, obtaining whatever I want, and living my days happily.
I thought it was a simple thing.
I thought it was really a simple thing.

"Hey Glen."
"....."
"Hey, Ichinose Glen."
"Hn?"
"About us..... you know....."
"....."
"When we become adults..... erm, will we be able to get married.....?
"....."
"Will we be able to stay together forever like now?"
On the green lawn.
Under the cloudless, clear sky.
Said the girl who was grasping my hand beside me.
She was so close that I could hear her breathing. I liked that voice. I liked that voice of hers. I liked her pulse. I liked everything about her.
But, I replied without looking at her.
"Impossible."
"Why?"
Her voice trembled a little.
And I said.
"You know it right?"
"It's because..... of my house?"
"..... I'm from the branch house. And you are the successor to head of the main house. we're a bad match for each other."
"But, but that doesn't matter....."
"It does."
I cut her off.
And she kept quiet. No, she might have been crying. Since she knew that as well. Since she truly knew that as well. Which was why her breathing became a little chaotic, and her grasp became much, much tighter.
At the same time, voices rang out from afar.
"There she is!"
Mahiru-sama!"
"It's that Ichinose brat again, were you the one who brought Mahiru-sama out!?"
"For someone of a lowly branch house, what the hell are you scheming!"
I looked up.
I spoke to the girl with ashen hair beside me.

"Your escorts are here."
She was indeed crying. While grasping my hand tightly,
"I..... don't want to separated from Glen."
"....."
"I..... I....."
However, at that moment, I could no longer hear the girl's voice. But it was not because the girl stopped speaking.
I was getting beaten up.
Grown-ups came and beat me up.
"Stoooopppppppppp!"
The girl screamed, but her voice did not reach the grown-ups.
"Know your place, shitty brat!"
"Let's just kill him! He's just an unneeded Ichinose from the branch family!"
"Kill him! Kill him!"
Said the grown-ups as they continued beating me.
I looked at the crying girl vacantly while I was getting beaten up.
The girl called Mahiru.
To me, who was lowly born, she was the sun.....
"Stop! Please, stop!"
At that moment, I lost consciousness for an instant.
The iron smell of blood.
The endless clear blue sky.
The nice feeling of the lawn.
As I started to fall amongst those things, I thought.
About the time when I was a kid, when I thought that any kind of dream I had would be granted, but yet.
Being with the person I like, obtaining whatever I want, and living my days happily.
Those seemed like really simple things, but yet.
Those truly seemed like really simple things, but yet.
"..... power."
I murmured as I was falling to the ground.
I clenched my fist tightly,
"..... I don't have, enough power..... to obtain the things I want."
And looked up.
It seemed like the girl was about to be taken away.
She looked at me with tears in her eyes.
And she appeared to be apologizing to me, again and again.
Sorry.
It's all my fault. Sorry.
Even when she was not at fault.
Even when the one who was at fault was the lowly born, powerless me.
"....."
I looked at her and extended my hand.
Towards empty space.

Towards the sun.
Towards Mahiru.
While I was thinking about, 'what should I do in order to obtain anything, anything that I want', I.....

♦

And then, 10 years went by.

Chapter 1 - Enrollment of a Hated One

"Glen-sama, Glen-sama, from today on, you will be a high school student, are you mentally prepared for it?"
"....."
"I, I, to be frank, am feeling nervous. No, I'm fully aware that this is the moment where one could retort, 'is that what the guard of Glen-sama should be saying?', but! But you know! As a retainer of the Ichinose House, entering the First Shibuya High School is, as expected, quite a nerve-wrecking thing. Erm, so....."
Even as the voice of the girl went on, Ichinose Glen paid no heed to it and looked up at the sky.
The sky was covered in pink.
Cherry blossoms danced in the air.
Spring.
The season of enrollment.
Wearing a school uniform with a stand-up collar, with his hands tucked into his pockets, Glen was walking underneath the cherry blossoms. Continuing down along this road, would be where the First Shibuya High School stood.
Framed by blacked hair covered in very gentle waves, accompanied with a somewhat cold look in his eyes. With those very eyes, he looked at the girl who had been babbling non-stop beside him.
A girl who was of the same age as him, at 15. Her height was probably around 160 cm. Clad in a sailor uniform, crowned with brown hair. A beauty with well-ordered features which one would be unable to envisage just from her boisterous way of speaking.
She was Hanayori Sayuri.
Sayuri, apparently really nervous, had her hands pressed against her chest as she spoke.
"Erm, so, even though I think it might also be because of my own failings, ahhm, I'll do my best so please take good care....."
But, cutting her off, Glen said.
"Ahh, Sayuri."
"Y-Yes, what is it, Glen-sama!"
"Your clamoring has been rather annoying for a while."
"Eeeehhhhhh!?"
Sayuri raised her hands to her shocked face, and further added,

"I-I beg your pardon!"
Clearly downhearted, Sayuri shuffled to the back.
And drew near to the girl who had been trailing behind Glen.
She then said.
"Uwuuhh, Yuki-chan..... Glen-sama is mad at me. He said that I was annoying."
On hearing that, the girl who was called 'Yuki-chan' looked up at Sayuri.
This was a petite girl who was no taller than 150 cm. She had a calm, awfully cold, expressionless face.
She was Yukimi Shigure.
Also 15 years of age, another guard of Glen, she was a girl who had accumulated many years of training at 『Ichinose House』.
Shigure said.
With her expressionless face,
"..... that's because you were really annoying."
"Auuh!?"
"..... if you babble too much, you will just lower the dignity of our master, Glen-sama of Ichinose House, and who on top of that is the next head of Ichinose House, so can you please stop?"
"Auuh auuh auuh!? Yuki-chan, you too!?"
The two of them were sure noisy.
Turning back to his two retainers,
"Haah....."
Sighed Glen and he turned to look ahead again.
At the school road with fluttering cherry blossoms.
At the students who were smiling at one another jubilantly.
However, as it stood, Sayuri was probably not the only one who would feel nervous about walking on this road, thought Glen.
The reason was because the school here was not a normal one.
Since it was an unsavory, cursed school ruled by Oni and sorcery.

《 First Shibuya High School 》.

It was a school for nurturing sorcerers, a school operated and administered by a prominent religious organization in Japan, which was known as 『Mikado no Oni』.
Of course, its outward appearance was different. It had the outward appearance of a normal high school. However, most of the people here were the children of those who belong to 『Mikado no Oni』 and who believed in its teachings.
And it was also an elite school, where only the selected best of the believers of 『Mikado no Oni』 were gathered.

"Auuh auuh auuh!? Yuki-chan, you too!?"
That was the true nature of the First Shibuya High School.
In other words,
"All these people here, are my rivals huh?"
A delightful mood in anticipation of a new term welled up in Glen as he surveyed the students.
Shigure, who was behind Glen, came forth to his side and said. With a thin smile as she too, looked intently at the other students,
"No no, it is unthinkable that the brats of 『Mikado no Oni』 would be as powerful as you, Glen-sama."
Following that, Sayuri joined in excitedly,
"T-that's right! Our next head of Ichinose House, Glen-sama, shall show his power to those stuck-up fellows of the Hiiragi House with a Bam!"
By the way, Hiiragi, had been the reigning house of 『Mikado no Oni』 ever since the organization arose 1200 years ago.
Then, 500 years ago, the Ichinose House split from the Hiiragi House to form 『Mikado no Tsuki』, and since then, 『Mikado no Oni』 and 『Mikado no Tsuki』 had been at terrible odds with each other.
Of course, Ichinose House could not publicly oppose Hiiragi House which was overwhelmingly larger and more powerful ---
The retainer of Ichinose House, Shigure, said.
"Firstly, judging from the system they created, whereby having the head of the Ichinose House enter the high school of their turf while he is still young and making him yield, one can know the caliber of those people from Hiiragi. Their era has ended, I say."
Sayuri then said in follow.
"Yeah, yeah, I too have always thought the same. So, Glen-sama, please do not worry. We definitely are the stronger ones."
On hearing that, Glen turned around and said to Sayuri.
"Not to mention worry, I'm not even nervous. You were the only one who had

been clamoring all this while."
"Auuh!?"
Following that, he looked down at Shigure and said.
"And also, Shigure."
"Yes?"
"You were calling those Hiiragi guys brats....."
"Ah, I'm sorry about that. As a result of my repulsion towards the Hiiragi people, I just....."
"No, I'm not talking about your choice of words."
"Then?"
Shigure cocked her head.
Glen then said to her.
Looking down at the small Shigure,
"Appearance-wise, you are the brat."
"Ah."
Uttered Shigure, who then said while biting her lips, her usually expressionless face in a tinge of red.
"..... are you telling me about the fact that you know that I'm bothered about it?"
"Haha, I'm just saying that you girls are underestimating the Hiiragi House. Thus I dare say this. Don't let your guard down for even one second. Stay alert. You should already know this, but the only 『Mikado no Tsuki』 people here are just the two of you and myself. In other words, the remaining people around us --- are all enemies."
Said Glen.
And by that time, their surroundings were already teeming with students aligned with the Hiiragi House.
Naturally.
This was the road used for commuting to their school.
And right now, Glen and his aides were entering a school that was administered by their enemy.
Shigure and Sayuri's faces tensed up.
They probably felt the several gazes that were directed at them.
They could even hear their voices.
"What the heck are they?"
"The crest on their collar school badge is not that of 『Mikado no Oni』 huh....."
"Yeah ~, I see. This is the year huh. They're the guys of Ichinose. Those without any real power are mingling into our school."
Voices like these started to proliferate among the group of students quickly.
Glen looked up at them.
At the moment, he could feel more than a hundred pair of eyes directed at him.
Cold eyes. Mocking eyes. Obvious ill will. Distaste. Contempt.
Shigure said,
"Damn, they are looking down....."
But, she was interrupted by Glen.
"I'm used to it. So don't move."

"But."
"Save it for another time. We won't show our power here. There is no need for us to become heated up like little kids, and show the scope of our power in reaction to their deliberate taunt."
After saying that, Glen turned around to face his followers and smiled at them.
Even though the two of them were unsatisfied, Glen already had that intention right from the beginning.
They would not show their power here.
Even while in school, he had decided that they would not show a single bit of the sorcery system which the Ichinose House had developed.
"....."
But at that moment, suddenly.
Dohn, he felt something hit his head.
Glen turned to the front.
What hit his head was a plastic bottle that contained cola. The cap was open.
Naturally, cola covered his head.
"Glen-sama!"
Sayuri shouted.
"Damn."
Shigure wanted to step out.
But Glen grabbed Shigure's shoulder.
"Don't butt in."
He pulled her back. He did not know what kind of face Shigure was making then.
However, while grinning foolishly, Glen put his hand on his head and said.
"Ah ~, this hurts though?"
Upon saying that, the students who were under the patronage of the Hiiragi House all laughed at once.
--- *what's wrong with him?*
--- *how cowardly can he get?*
--- *thus, this is only what the Ichinoses can amoun to.*
Glen did not know who threw the plastic bottle. But, he did not care about that.
The reason was because everyone here was an enemy anyway.
Thus, while receiving the dissing and mocking laughs from them, Glen told his followers.
"Sayuri, Shigure."
"..... yes."
"What is your will?"
Their voices trembled. They trembled in chagrin. They were bitter about seeing having their master ridiculed.
And this was probably also due to his own powerlessness.
If he had the power to crush the entire Hiiragi House now, he would not need to bear with all this. Because if the Ichinoses could overwhelm Hiiragis, then such a thing would not be happening.
Thus, Glen turned around and said.
"I'm sorry for making you feel this lousy. But, we have to bear with this for three

years. Will you continue to accompany me?"
Both Sayuri and Shigure looked up. With teary-looking faces which they did not want to let the Hiiragis see, they looked up and while nestling themselves closer to Glen,
"O-Of course. Since the only reason why I was born is to serve you, Glen-sama!"
Said Sayuri, who had her face shoved aside by Glen, who then said.
"The extent of that feels, heavy."
"Auh auh ah!?"
Sayuri groaned as she was brushed aside.
Following that, Shigure looked up at him,
"..... but, this is vexing. If you can just use the spells you have, Glen-sama, even in the Ichinose House, you have been dubbed as the talent who appears only once in a thousand years."
"Who said that?"
"My, father....."
"Samidare huh?"
"Yes. Even the rest of the top brass of 『Mikado no Tsuki』 also said that, as Glen-sama is the genius that appears only once in a thousand years, I have to protect you even at the cost of my life....."
But, cutting her off, Glen said.
"I see. That's how highly they think of me huh."
"Yes."
"Then, also tell those top brass old geezers."
"Huh?"
"For the Ichinose House which has a history of not even 500 years, there's no way you can get a genius who appears only once in a thousand years, morons."
"Eh, ah..... well..... haha, indeed."
Shigure smiled in slight amusement.
Looking at Shigure,
"My, Yuki-chan, you're smiling, how rare."
Sayuri said.
Both of them seemed to have calmed down.
Glen looked down at them and then turned around again. There were hardly any students left. School was about to start.
If school was starting, then the other students could not help but to stop teasing the worthless trash.
Thus most of them were no longer there.
The ones who were left was the Glen who was soaking wet from the thrown cola, and his two retainers.
"Well then, shall we go?"
Shigure then said.
"..... Glen-sama."
"Ah?"
"..... we should be the ones protecting our master, but yet we ended up getting protected....."

"Shut up fool. It's the master's duty to protect his subordinates."
"..... ah."
Shigure then kept quiet.
Then, from behind, Sayuri started,
"Hey hey hey, Yuki-chan, why is your face red?"
"I, I'm gonna kill you!"
"Eh eh eh eh eh, why!? Why're you hitting me, Yuki-chan!?"
The two of them were noisy as before.
Then, with a gloomy face, Glen started turning towards the direction of the school.
The school was already visible. No, this place was already part of the school premises where normal people could not set foot in.
Tall roadside cherry trees.
At the end of it, was the school gate, and there, a man stood.
He had rare white hair. Just like him, he was in a uniform with a stand-up collar.
The man was smiling thinly.
He was clearing smiling at them.
He then suddenly raised his hand.
In his right hand.
A talisman was at his fingertips. Glen immediately knew what kind of talisman that was. It was a spell talisman. It was a talisman used to perform a Hiiragi spell.
That talisman burned up and disappeared.
Instantly, a flash of lightning appeared in front of his eyes.
That spell invocation speed was amazing. That man was probably very skilled. He might even be someone with the Hiiragi name.
However, even so.
--- *I can dodge that.*
Glen judged.
I can even make a counterattack.
If so, how should I act?
How should I deal with this?
The nervous signals interconnect in his brain as he considered in this manner, and then, he acted.
First, he turned his gaze to the right. In the opposite direction of the lightning bolt. As if he did not notice that lightning bolt, he started turning towards his retainers behind him.
Then, at that moment, the lightning bolt popped.
Pohn, a small sound rang out, and he could feel his body getting struck.
"Guah."
From that instant of intense impact, he almost lost consciousness. He was aware of his body falling to the ground. But even so, his body could not move for a while.
He could tell that both Sayuri and SHigure were yelling something. With their eyes widened slightly and faces on the verge of crying, the two of them called out to him.

Looking up at the both of them vacantly, Glen thought.
That was a little dangerous ---
If he had dodged thoughtlessly, there was the possibility of his real strength getting revealed.
But, did I manage to show that I couldn't react to it well enough?
Following that.
"....."
If I fight with him seriously, can I win?
While pondering about such things, he waited for his entire body to recover its senses.
Sayuri held his head to her and was crying.
"Glen-sama, Glen-sama."
Glen then said.
"My face is touching your breast you know?"
"Hey!?"
Following that, Shigure stood in front of him as if to protect him and was looking at the school gate.
"I, I beg your forgiveness, Glen-sama. Such a thing happened even when I'm here."
Glen then said to her.
"You didn't make any mistake. I took the hit on purpose."
"Eh!?"
"Will you be able to react immediately to an attack coming from any direction? If not, my capabilities would be made known. So, pretend that you are more capable than me. Let them see that I'm a useless piece of trash that can't do anything without being protected by you."
"No way....."
The trash got up. And held his head,
"Damn, what in the world happened....."
He tried saying.
Shigure's face looked troubled for an instant, and following that, she pointed in the direction of the school gate,
"A-An attack came from right there."
She said in a somewhat monotonous tone.
Then, at the point, Glen turned his eyes towards the school gate for the first time.
The man was still looking at them.
He looked straight, intently at them, still smiling.
On seeing that, Glen moaned gloomily,
"..... ah ~ this isn't good huh. Did he find out?"
The man then shrugged his shoulders, and turned around. He entered the school.
Glen looked hard at the back of that man and then said.
"Well, shall we get going as well?"
Sayuri then said.
"But your wound....."
"Hnah?"

Glen touched his forehead with his hand. There was a little blood. He wiped the blood off his hand,
"Haha, the blood smells like cola. Get me some fresh clothes."
"Then, I'll go back and get them."
Said Shigure. Glen then gave her an order.
"And also, check out the true identity of that guy. He looks pretty strong. We need to be on our guard with him."
"Understood."
After nodding in acknowledgement, Shigure started running off in the opposite direction of the school.
"Well then, shall we go to school?"
On hearing that, with an apologetic look as before, Sayuri said.
"E-Erhm, I really wasn't of much....."
"Just by being by my side, you're already a big help to me."
"....."
"Firstly, we are in the middle of our enemy's turf you know? I won't bring anyone else other than the ones I trust the most. So don't make that kind of face."
On hearing that, Sayuri's face become flustered for some reason and her cheeks flushed red,
"E-E-Erhm, Glen-sama, my life belongs to you....."
"Like I said, that sounds heavy."
"Auh auh ah!?"
Glen laughed at Sayuri who had her face shoved aside and her body arched backwards.
"Jokes aside, let's go. But well, it seems like right from the first day, our high school life is going to be fun."

And thus, the 15 year old Ichinose Glen, became a high school freshman.

Chapter 2 - Shinya's Classroom

Classroom.
Homeroom.
A sight commonly seen in a normal school.
"....."
Right there, was Glen.
In Year 1 Class 9, in the seat by the window right at the back.
It was the first homeroom lesson right now. A woman who seemed to be the homeroom teacher was talking about the school entrance ceremony which was going to commence after this.
By the way, Sayuri and Shigure were not in this class.
Sayuri was in Class 1.
Shigure was in Class 2; the two of them were assigned to the classes that were furthest away from Class 9, which clearly could be thought to be the product of someone's meddling.
"Well, it's not something unexpected though."

The reason was because, the place that Glen was in, was one whose objective was to show to the next upcoming head of Ichinose the exceptional, overwhelming power possessed by the Hiiragi House.
"Isolating you, bullying and subjugating you huh. This has been the underhanded system they had been using for 200 years after all."
Glen smiled.
By the way, 25 years ago, his father had attended this school just as Glen was doing now, and had completely submitted to the Hiiragi House. Putting aside whether he liked or disliked the main house, whenever it was time to make some major decision, he always acted in the role of someone who was the pet of the Hiiragi House.
As such, his father did have a good reputation among the 『Mikado no Tsuki』.
But Glen did not think that as something bad. He did not mind. It was not something that had taken away his respect for his father.
His father had just been doing what he was able to within his limits. As long as he was able to avoid conflict for their organization with that, it was fine.
And even on that day itself.
"....."
Glen recalled.
The memory of that time, when he was a child.
The memory of that day when he last met Mahiru.
The memory of when he was beaten up by the people from the Hiiragi House and brought back to his home.
His father looked at him apologetically, and said.
"Please forgive your powerless father....."
With a teary face, his father hugged his son who was covered with wounds, and immediately turned to apologize to the Hiiragis.
Even though his son was the one getting beaten up, he still apologized.

"....."
Glen snapped out of his reverie and looked up.
He looked around.
40 people.
The males and females each made up half the class.
From the register of the class, it seemed like this class had quite a number of children of the top brass of 『Mikado no Oni』.
Jyuujou House.
Goshi House.
Sanguu House.
Even in the world of sorcery, these were among the famous houses.
By the way, Ichinose House used to be the highest ranked supporting family of the Hiiragis. But right now, they had fallen to the lowest rank.
A few of the students took fleeting glances at this lowest ranked. Only repugnance and animosity from knowing that someone like him was their classmate could be felt from them.

The lady teacher furthermore said.
"Well, now that everyone here has become a member of this First Shibuya High, I hope that everyone here can have a fruitful high school life with the pride and confidence befitting of a student of the greatest sorcery school in Japan."
Following that, the lady teacher turned her gaze joyfully to Glen,
"Well, even though we have a rat who managed to mingle in, don't let it concern you. As the elites who are the most talented and have the best results, the students of this class will have to undertake the task of show the dignity of this school to the rat, I feel."
The rat was referring to Glen.
The students laughed. Even though not all of them did, those who did seemed to be enjoying themselves.
And then, even the rat also grinned foolishly for now.
Following that, he measured the teacher's strength. He weighed whether the teacher who had mocked him had more power than him.
It did not matter whether he was ridiculed.
He came here knowing that this would happen.
But, he could not allow himself to lose in power. He could not allow himself to lose when it came to spell invocation ability.
Unlike his father, he was burdened with a mission.
Since, unlike his father who ran the organization in a gentle and peaceful manner, he had a different ambition hidden in his heart.
"....."
While grinning foolishly, Glen looked around.
The girl of Jyuujou House.
The guy of Goshi House.
The girl of Sanguu House.
By the way, he already knew from the register that there was just one special person assigned to this class.
His name was ---

Hiiragi Shinya.

A person who bore the Hiiragi name.
To the those who owed allegiance to 『Mikado no Oni』, the Hiiragi name held a special distinguished status - so much so that the Hiiragis could even be called as the representatives of God.
To those of 『Mikado no Tsui』, the Ichinoses was the same. Just like how Glen was to Sayuri and Shigure.
But right now, that seat was empty.
Furthest away from Glen's seat --- the seat taken by the distinguished Hiiragi was assigned to the place that was the furthest than the seat of the dirty rat.
In other words, it was at the first row of the classroom, close to the entrance.
At that moment, the lady teacher said.
"Everyone should already have realized this, but this is the very class that

Shinya-sama will be in. The honor to be with....."
And so on and so forth.
In other words, they would be together in the same class with such a wonderful person.
The students in the class were listening to the teacher with dreamy looks. It was a completely different attitude as compared to the earlier looks directed at the rat.
Glen smiled again at the idiotic, easy-to-understand change in attitude. Following that, he looked out the window. The roadside cherry trees outside the school gate could be seen from the window.
While staring at them,
"I'm worried about Shigure and Sayuri."
He murmured softly.
At that moment, he could hear the sound of the classroom door sliding open. In that instant, it was evident that the classroom returned to silence and he could feel the class tensed up.
And then,
"My, why is it so quiet?"
That voice rang out from the rear exit of the classroom.
It was the voice of a man.
The lady teacher said in a nervous voice,
"Oh my, it's Shinya-sama, welcome to my class..... Shinya-sama, here is your seat....."
But, Shinya cut her off and said.
"Eeh, I don't want such a front seat."
"Eh, erm....."
"I, would like that seat. So can I swap?"
"Wha, I mean..... but that....."
Glen could hear an ongoing conversation that seemed to indicate the arrival of a king.
It seemed like the one who carried the blood of Hiiragi had finally appeared.
Glen looked up, and turned his gaze into the classroom.
But, he ended getting slightly surprised by what he saw.
The reason was because, the man there, was the one who had thrown a talisman at Glen at the school gate this morning.
White hair. A uniform with a stand-up collar. Despite carrying a grin on his face, he had a sharp glint in his eyes. He had a smile that was brimming with self-confidence.
It seemed like this person was none other than Hiiragi Shinya.
I didn't even need to ask Shigure to investigate his identity huh, thought Glen.
To top it off, that very Shinya approached Glen. With a grin on his face, he said to the girl who was seated beside Glen.
"Hey? I'd like to sit here. Can you swap with me?"
The girl was stunned for an instant and she then said as she got up frantically,
"Ah, y-yes! Of course, please help yourself!"

"Hey? I'd like to sit here. Can you swap with me?"
On seeing that, the lady teacher said.
"B-But, sitting beside that rat....."
Shinya cut her off with half-closed eyes.
"Hey Sensei. Is it really okay for a teacher to be calling her student a rat?"
"Ah, erm....."
"We are all in the same class. We have to get along."
"Well....."
The girl who had been seated beside Glen then made way.
"Thank you."
Shinya grinned and took the seat beside Glen.
Then,
"Aah, everyone, I'm sorry for interrupting. Please continue the homeroom lesson."
After Shinya said that, the lady teacher stepped back to the podium in a fluster that was unbecoming for a teacher, and resumed the homeroom lesson.
She talked about the protocol for the school entrance ceremony.
About how the term in this sorcery school would start and what the classes would be like.
Shinya listened on with a grin for a while.
Glen turned his gaze out the window again.
At that moment,
"Hey."
Shinya called out to him.
"....."
"Erm, Ichinose Glen-kun, right? Can I call you Glen?"
Glen then turned around and looked at Shinya. He was still grinning.
Glen stared at the face of Shinya, and replied.
"Are perhaps you talking to me?"
Shinya then smiled and said.

"What's with the polite language?"
"I had been strictly taught since young that I must not defy the Hiiragi House."
"Eeh, really?"
"Yes."
"I see. That's, kind of boring."
"I'm very sorry."
Glen lowered his head. As Shinya stopped saying anything to him, Glen started looking out the window again but it was during then Shinya began again,
"But then, you received my attack on purpose this morning right?"
"....."
"My, I wonder why you did that? Perhaps to hide your true power?"
"....."
"Isn't that a clear act of defiance? Your ambition is so obvious you know?"
Damn. Seems like he really saw through it.
Glen looked at Shinya and said.
"About that..... I am really sorry."
"Oh, you admit to it pretty readily huh?"
"However, I was not admitting to the ambition part. It's just that I've been taught at home that I must not defy anyone, and not bring on the wrath of the people of the Hiiragi House, and as a result, it is true that I received the attack so as not to stir up any trouble. It's not like I was trying to hide my true power."
"Fuhn. I see."
"Yes."
"I see ~."
Shinya looked hard at Glen. Looking hard, grinning. And for some reason, he inched closer. He inched strangely close to him and said into his ear.
With a slightly lowered voice,
"Hey Glen. Stop your boring lies."
"....."
Glen narrowed his eyes on hearing that. He looked intently at Shinya,
"I'm not ly....."
But Shinya cut him off and said.
"Well, doesn't matter ~. But it's just that I've been hoping all this time that we can actually be comrades you know."
"....."
"Since both you and I hate the Hiiragi House, I was thinking that we could actually join hands and secretly do lots of interesting things together."
"....."
"By the way, the Hiiragi blood doesn't flow in me. I'm a foster son. Since I was a kid, I've been raised in a manner to be fit to join the Hiiragi House. That's why I hate the Hiiragi House. In other words, we are comrades."
He said.
Glen had heard of something like this before. In order to strengthen the power in sorcery in the descendants of their bloodline, the Hiiragi House would seek out capable children, teach and raise them, then through the process of sifting and

selection, adopt those who survived as their foster children.
Then they would make them marry those of their bloodline and give birth to children.
Such a rumor had been around for quite some time.
But Glen did not know whether Shinya was really a foster son of the Hiiragi House or not. More importantly, even if what Shinya said was true, there was no reason for Glen to reveal his true thoughts.
Thus, Glen was about to reply with a "you've misunderstood". He was about to reply with a "I'm not the person you thought out to be".
However, before he could do that ---
Shinya said.
"By the way, my partner is Mahiru. Hiiragi Mahiru. Ever since I was born, I had been raised to become her partner."
Instantly, Glen could tell that he had reacted.
Shinya looked on.
Receiving Glen's stare head on, Shinya smiled.
"Oh my, your true nature came out quite easily."
"What may you be referring to?"
"Well well, don't worry about it. I never thought we can become friends right away today."
"....."
"By the way, did you know that Mahiru also came to this school? She's really excellent and has thus been selected to give a speech as the freshman representative, it seems. Isn't that amazing? Your ex-girlfriend is....."
On hearing those words, Glen responded while keeping his expression unchanged.
"Mahiru-sama and I did not have that kind of relation....."
"Now she's my fiancee though."
"....."
In a flash, Glen's words stopped, and he directed a slightly forceful gaze towards Shinya.
Shinya did not miss that and grinned with his well-ordered face. And he then said in a taunting manner.
"Why? Vexed?"
"Not really."
"Ha, haha, that face. Your ambition's completely written on your face. So why don't we get along? Just saying this, but Mahiru and I aren't really on that close terms so don't worry. Even though I got the Hiiragi name, I'm still just a foster son. I'm still just a filthy spawn of lowly birth. At the main house, the treatment I get is the same as what you're getting here now. I'm of course pissed by that, so I'm thinking of destroying everything."
He said.
He said something that would have gotten him executed immediately if it got leaked outside.
Is this a trap, or does this fellow really have the thought of rebelling against the Hiiragi House? Glen did not know.

Even though he did not know, it did not seem like Shinya was a guy he should get involved in, thus Glen changed his approach.
He looked up, averted his eyes from Shinya, and said.
"Tch, you're really a talkative fella huh. My goal is different from yours. I don't know what you want to accomplish, but don't get me involved in it."
Instantly, Shinya's face brightened.
"Ah, you stopped your polite speech."
"Shut up."
"Then, are we friends? Let's be friends?"
"I told you to shut up."
"Ah-haha. Well, whatever. At any rate, I'm the only comrade you can have here. So you have no choice but to get along with me."
As before, Shinya smiled in delight.
Glen then took a glance at Shinya. His mood became bitter at having attracted the attention of a pretty troublesome fellow right on the first day of school.
At that moment, the lady teacher said.
"All right, it's about time for the school entrance ceremony. Everyone, shall we go?"
With that, the students stood up.
Shinya too stood up and said.
"Well, shall we go? Let's go hear the speech of our common goddess."
The goddess was probably referring to Mahiru.
However, since that day, when they were separated by the adults, Glen had not seen Mahiru for 10 years. Thus, when he heard her name being mentioned after all this time, he did not know what kind of emotions he should be feeling.
But, right now, he was going to head to where Mahiru was.
Mahiru was going to give a speech as the freshman representative.
Though he had never thought that he would meet again under such circumstances.
Shinya held out his hand and said.
"Come on, let's go, Glen."
He called his name familiarly without any honorific.
Glen looked up at that hand, scowled, and brushed it away.
"Don't come close to me."
"Haha."

And then, Glen and the rest of the class moved to the auditorium.

Chapter 3 - Freshman Representative

All the students were assembled in the auditorium.
They totaled 1100 people.
600 freshmen.
340 second year students.
160 third year students.

That was the breakdown.
The reason why there were fewer students as the school year went up was because, in each term, students would undergo numerous selection exams on sorcery techniques and based on their results, their ability would be evaluated and ranked, and if their capabilities were deemed to be unfit for this school, they would be forced to drop out.
And thus, by the time the first year ended, around half the students would be left.
Thus as the school year went up, the number of students would be less.
Of course, the students would study frantically, and train. Raw fighting techniques, sorcery techniques; if one did not excel in both these areas, one could not survive in this school.
"But nevertheless, I'm exempt from this, I suppose."
Glen muttered as he looked around the auditorium which was crowded with students.
By the way, Glen had taken some kind of entrance examination to this First Shibuya High.
On top of the common math, language, and history exams, there were also a sorcery technical exam and a spell knowledge exam.
And he tackled all these shoddily. Rather, because the level of the questions were such that it looked like he would get all of them right if he did them carelessly, he had to do his best to think of erroneous answers as he tackled the exams.
And the outcome should have been a score that was too low for him to pass.
That would probably be what the grader thought. *Why did this useless fella come take the entrance examination to this First Shibuya High where only the elites go to*, he would have thought.
But for some reason, Glen was here.
He ended up getting accepted into a school for nurturing sorcerers, where the believers of 『Mikado no Oni』 enroll in, and where even among those who enrolled, only the most capable people would get accepted by the school.
In other words, there was no meaning to the exams.
"Which means in the end, no matter how bad my results are during these 3 years, I'll still remain here and continue to get picked on."
Glen murmured, but in contrast to what he murmured, he was strangely delightful as he looked intently at the students who were going to pick on him from hereon.
The students were cheerful.
While being hopeful about their new school life, they were also anxious of the competition that was going to start, and the chattering increased.
On the stage of the auditorium, the long greeting by the principal was about to end.
"You are students who are chosen. You are the seeds of light who might become candidates for the top brass within the 『Mikado no Oni』 in future. Hold that pride in your heart, and have a fun student life....."
Such a long talk had been continuing for quite some time.
Glen looked up at the principal.

Then, at that moment,
"Hey, Ichinose Glen. Answer a question of mine."
A voice called out to him from the side.
Glen turned towards the voice.
There, a girl clad in sailor uniform stood. Since she was just right beside him, she was probably in the same class as him.
She had almond-shaped eyes with a seemingly strong will, and red hair. Fair skin.
"Were you talking to me?"
Glen replied.
On hearing that, the girl then said with a somewhat mocking face.
"Is there anyone other than you who belongs to the filthy Ichinose House?"
"Filthy, huh."
Glen smiled at those words. He then looked at the girl and said.
"By the way who're you? Which high and mighty land did you come from?"
On hearing that, the girl's face turned into one of incredulity, and she touched her red hair. And then said.
"Hah, as I thought, the Ichinoses are ignorant on top of being rude. To think that you don't know who I am after seeing this hair."
By the way, Glen could already more or less guess who this girl was.
She was most likely someone of the Jyuujou House.
Rather, there should not be anyone among the learners of sorcery who would not know about that red hair.
Jyuujou Tohito.
He exorcised a legendary Oni all by himself, and the price he paid for that was a curse he took on, and ever since then, his descendants were born with red hair ---

That was written even in history books.
In other words, when Glen saw that red hair, naturally, he immediately knew that she was someone of the Jyuujou House --- one of the famous old houses, which could be counted with just one hand, that served the Hiiragi House; but, Glen said to her.
"Are you that famous? Are you an idol?"
Instantly, the red haired girl looked at him with a clearly disgusted face. She then said,
"..... it's a wonder someone with this level of knowledge could enter this school huh."
Glen then smiled and said.
"I happened to get everything right with my die rolls."
"We weren't using computer-marked sheets for our exams duh. Well, at any rate, you're probably unconditionally accepted so that the candidate successor for the next head of Ichinose House can learn his place."
After saying that, she continued looking at him with scornful eyes.
Glen then asked.
"And? What can the excessively self-conscious idol-wannabe possibly want from

me?"
"Who is the idol-wannabe!"
Her almond-shaped eyes turned up a notch further. Even with that, the fact that her face did not crumble was probably because she was a beauty.
"Aah, you are really noisy. Then, tell me, who on earth are you?"
She then had a face that seemed to say "it's time to listen up and learn my name", and she said.
"I am Jyuujou Mito. Of that very Jyuujou House."
She grinned so smugly as if saying that there was no one who would not prostrate himself to her after hearing this.
Glen then said to her.
"Hehh."
"How is it? Is the fear getting to you now?"
"Hn ~"
"Fufuh, you may prostrate and apologize you know? Well, even if an ignorant Ichinose is to prostrate before me, it's not something that will make me happy though."
"You know."
"What is it? Are you really that happy to have me talk to you?"
Glen then replied.
"I still don't know anything about the Jyuujous though."
"I see. You're that happy huh. Then it's fine. I'll forgive your earlier igno..... I'll..... hey wait a minute. What did you just say?"
"Like I was saying, I don't know anything about the Jyuujous."
"Hey! Are you kidding me!? That Jyuujou you know? The descendant of that Jyuujou who sealed the 『Shiki of Kaede』 you know?"
"No idea."
"^^^^"
Her face looked as if she was trying to holler something but no words came out. She then shook her head in an agitated manner,
"No no, don't get angry Mito. He's just a lowly rat of the Ichinoses..... you should already know that he doesn't have any form of human intelligence right? If you get angry with just a small thing like this, you'll spoil your family name. So calm down."
The red haired girl patted her small chest, and breathed in and out deeply as she said that.
What's wrong with her?..... Glen thought while looking down at her, and he then looked around once more. And he thought.
This place is probably filled with people like her.
At the very least, the only ones who could come here were those who had accumulated years of pretty strict training in sorcery since young. On top of that, this place was probably also filled up with those who were bounded by a hierarchical society based on lineages. And in that case, most of them were probably unsociable.
"Well, if we're talking about sociability, I shouldn't be the one to talk about

others."
He laughed softly.
Mito then said angrily.
"What are you laughing about!"
"Ah? Nothing really."
"Well, fine. I don't think there's any need for me to introduce myself any further to an ignorant guy like you."
"I see. Well, I only know that you want to become an idol....."
"Like I said, that's not it!"
Yelled Mito.
And this time round, her yell was loud enough for it to reverberate within the auditorium.
And with that, the principal's words stopped. All eyes were on her.
Mito's face stiffened into one that said, *oh no, I've gone and done it*, and her face was flushed to a scarlet red that was no less than the color of her hair.
"A-Ah, erm, I beg your pardon. Please continue."
She said in a small voice.
And with that, the principal resumed his talk. The other students too turned away immediately. It was probably because they knew her lineage from the color of her hair. That was how famous and powerful the Jyuujou House was.
Mito seemed to shrink from the embarrassment.
Glen said to comfort her.
"Haha, it's great isn't it? In an instant, you caught everyone's attention like an idol....."
"I'll kill you you know?"
Dohn, Glen was struck in the back. The force of the blow was not too big. Well, that was as expected with a slender body like hers. In other words, she was probably the type that utilizes sorcery to confer her body with battle abilities. Since, in the history books, it was written that the Jyuujous were people who overwhelm Onis with their brute strength.
That was how famous the Jyuujou House was as a militant house. Its members were often employed in the positions of assassins or escorts. She was probably also someone who possessed a considerable amount of ability.
That was thus why Glen looked at her with measuring eyes, and thought.
--- *now, do I have the capability to kill her?*

But, he did not give away his thoughts. Glen looked down at the Mito who had hit him, and asked.
"And?"
"What is it?"
"You were the one who started talking to me right? What do you want? Are you hitting on me?"
"Hitting on..... of course it's not that!"
Her voice once again was on the verge of becoming loud, and she lowered her voice frantically. It seemed like she was the type who got emotional easily.

Mito said to him.
"What I wanted to ask is about Hiiragi Shinya-sama."
"Hm."
"I saw you having a deep conversation with Shinya-sama earlier, what on earth were you talking about?"
She asked.
And with that, Glen more or less knew what she wanted to ask.
The Jyuujou House often served the Hiiragi House as their escorts. And thus, it was a given that she would want to have a grasp of the situation whereby Hiiragi Shinya was talking unreservedly to someone of the Ichinose House.
So Glen replied.
"It wasn't anything important."
"You're lying. I saw the both of you talking in a rather friendly manner."
"You were paying really close attention huh."
"Whatever, just spit it out. What in the world were you and Shinya-sama talking about?"
Vexed at her persistent question, Glen said.
"I mean, it won't do you any good even if you hear it. Do you really want to hear it?"
"Let me hear it."
"Ah ~, I mean, guys of our age can only talk about one thing."
"What would that be?"
"Girls."
"Eh?"
"Like who are the cute girls in class. And, Shinya said that you were cute, you know? He was thinking of asking you out tonight, he said."
"Huh? Eh.....!?"
In a flash, Mito's expression changed. With a beet red face,
"Eh, eh, th-th-th-that's a lie right? I can't, do this..... Shinya-sama already, has Mahiru-sama....."
Mito said readily.
It seemed like the relationship between Shinya and Mahiru was a well-known thing, and there was no problem with it being publicized.
If so, why did I not know of this? The question surfaced in Glen's head.
If Mito could said it so readily, then this would definitely be something the Ichinose House would know of, and in that case, why did he not hear about it?
"It's my Dad huh....."
Glen murmured with a slightly troubled face. His father probably withheld the information to prevent him from hearing about matters regarding Mahiru.
If so, there was a possibility that the guards that were directly under Glen, Yukimi Shigure and Hanayori Sayuri, might know of this.
They probably also knew who would giving the speech as the freshman representative today. They knew it and hid it from their master.
Glen then smiled wryly to himself.
"Hah, what the hell? It's just a 5 year old brat's meaningless crush you know? Did

it seem like I still have any kind of lingering affection for her?"
Mito resumed with a flustered look as before.
"B-Besides, it's forbidden for us retainers to get into that kind of relationship with the people of the Hiiragi House. So, can you please help me tell Shinya-sama that it would also be troubling for him?"
"....."
"And also, I really love and respect Mahiru-sama, so can you also tell Shinya-sama that we should pretend that this conversation never took place....."
"Ah? You are acquainted with Mahiru?"
On hearing that, Mito's expression changed again. Her eyes turned up angrily,
"I won't allow an Ichinose to call Mahiru-sama's name so casually!"
Her voice became loud again.
Glen corrected himself in order to pacify her.
"Ah ~, erm, are you acquainted with Mahiru-sama?"
Mito then nodded in affirmation. She then started proudly,
"Mahiru-sama is really beautiful, and she would come into contact with us kindly without regard to her station, it's like she's a goddess."
Goddess --- she called her that too.
It seemed like Mahiru was pretty well-liked.
Mito continued.
"On top of that, she excels in both the 'sword and the pen', and even in the entrance exam for this school, she was the top in all the subjects. To us who owe our allegiance to the 『Mikado no Oni』, to be able to serve under Mahiru-sama would be the ultimate blessed thing."
And so it seemed.
Top in all subjects.
Mahiru had cleared that school entrance exam as the top student.
In other words, among the freshmen, the most capable person is Mahiru? --- Glen pondered.
And those words surfaced in his head again.
If so, will I be able to defeat Mahiru? Do I possess the power to overwhelm the Hiiragi House?
But at the same time, another image surfaced in his head. No, it might be better to say that it inadvertently surfaced in his head perhaps.
The scenery of the time when he was still playing with Mahiru.
Green lawn.
Under the cloudless, clear sky.
Always beside him, the Mahiru who was always smiling happily, joyfully, innocently.
It has been 10 years since then huh, thought Glen.
Time flies.
Then, at that moment, the principal said.
"It has been a long speech, but that will be all from me. And next, let's move on to the greeting message from this year's freshman representative. This year's freshman representative was unanimously decided. We are honored to welcome

the daughter of the very Hiiragi House to this school --- and now, Hiiragi Mahiru-sama --- I'll hand it over to you."
On saying that, the principal bowed.
Then, from the wing of the stage, a girl appeared.
With beautiful, long ashen hair, and dignified, resolute eyes. Even though her face was best described as coldly well-chiseled, she did not appear cold at all.
Gentle, graceful, and just like when she was still a child, she still had that same innocent look, it seemed. It was understandable why others would want to call her a goddess.
"....."
The crowded auditorium returned to silence in such an atypical manner that it would be hard to imagine that there were over a thousand people here.
Everyone's attention was drawn in by Mahiru.
Of course, just the Hiiragi name alone would have that kind of power. The power to silence all who were gathered here.
But right now, that was not the only thing that happened.
It would appear that the students were rendered motionless, struck by some sort of bright light that was inside of Mahiru.
Mahiru stepped up to the podium.
She looked intently at the students, greeted them lightly, and smiled gently.
"Thank you for the introduction. I am Hiiragi Mahiru. Today, I've been given the task of greeting you as the freshman representative. Pleased to meet you all."
A crystal clear voice.
With her voice alone, she seemed to have put the auditorium under a magic spell.
Beside Glen, Mito had a spellbound face.
A few rows in front of him, Hiiragi Shinya turned around to face him.
Of course, Mahiru did not turn her gaze towards Glen. It was probably difficult to find him among such a large crowd anyway.

"Thank you for the introduction. I am Hiiragi Mahiru. Today, I've been given the task of greeting you as the freshman representative. Pleased to meet you all."

Or maybe,
"She's not interested in the lowly, poor achiever of an Ichinose rat huh?"
As if she were singing without a hitch, Mahiru continued her greeting.
Looking up at her, Glen thought.
The distance between me and her hasn't changed much since old times.

Between God and the crawling rat on the ground.

Glen grinned at that thought, and after that,
"Haha."
Hidden from everyone, he clenched his fist.

♦

Night.
The time was 1930.
After being made to listen to the talk about the school curriculum which was going to take place from this day onward, they had to take several sorcery-related tests despite the fact that the school entrance ceremony was just over, and only after the tests were done, Glen and his followers could go home.
The place that Glen was residing in was a unit in a high-rise condominium which was 15 minutes' walk away from the school.
It was a pretty large 5LDK unit[1] the Ichinose House had rented for Glen for him to attend Shibuya First High.
Rather, in order to prevent enemies from sneaking up on them, they had rented all the units on the above and below floors, and placed spell traps to guard against infiltration --- that was how cautious they were.
In other words, 4 other units aside from the one that Glen was staying in on this floor were rented. Totaling up the units on the floors above and below, there should have been 14 units in excess, but yet,
"Why are the both you in the same room as me?"
Sitting in a cross-legged fashion on the sofa of the living room, with a stern face, Glen said to the two girls in front of him.
They were his guards, Yukimi Shigure and Hanayori Sayuri.
The initial plan was to have them stay in the units flanking Glen's unit, but right now, the two of them, shouldering their backpacked luggage, had moved into this room.
Shigure answered Glen's question.
"..... as one would expect, as retainers, we should not leave our master's side under any circumstances....."
"You're hindrances."
"Uwuh....."
Following that, Sayuri said.
"B-But but, this unit is a 5LDK after all, and us retainers will just act stealthily and stay out of the way, and quietly live our life....."

"Though you have no precedence of managing that before."
"Auh....."
"That's enough, get out. I hate all this clamor."
"But."
"No buts. Just get out."
Ordered Glen. He pointed to the exit.
Then, the **retainers** nodded and said.
First Shigure,
"..... all right Sayuri. Let's pretend to listen to Glen-sama and get out first, and we'll return during the night."
Following that, Sayuri clapped her hands together,
"That's what you get from Yuki-chan, you're so sma....."
"Like hell you are!"
Bellowed Glen.
He then sighed and said.
"Even though you are my retainers, you don't even listen to what I say."
Shigure protested.
"But we're just putting your safety as our topmost priority, Glen-sama."
Yeah yeah, Sayuri too nodded in agreement.
"That's right. We are already prepared to lay down our lives for your sake, Glen-sama."
The two of them seemed to have no intention of leaving, and Glen folded his arms in exasperation. He then thought.
About the agony that he would experience from living with 2 girls in the same condo unit for 3 years.
They were all adolescents.
Which meant that they probably had to show an unusual amount of consideration for one another. That would be awfully troublesome. Just plain troublesome.
And so he said.
"Hey, do you girls really understand the meaning of living together with me in the same unit?"
Sayuri then cocked her head to the side and said.
"The meaning of living together, you say?"
"That's right."
"What will that be?"
Glen then replied.
He pointed to a carton box which had yet to be unpacked in the corner of the room,
"Do you know what's inside that box?"
Sayuri turned around to look at the box, and she asked.
"What's inside?"
"Porn mags."
"Eh.....!!"
Sayuri's face stiffened in an instant.
By the way, that box did not contain any porn mags but the truth did not matter

now.
Glen grinned and continued.
"In other words, it means just that. When you live under the same roof as a guy, you would need to bear with things like that you know? Knowing that, are you still going to say that you want to live here?"
"..... e-erhm....."
"All right. Now that you know that it's impossible to live together, quickly get out of....."
But, Sayuri cut him off and said. For some reason, her face was beet red and she squeezed shut her eyes,
"I-It's okay..... I-I've heard about this stuff from my father."
"Huh?"
"T-T-T-That this is also part of, m-m-m-my job, if you have n-n-n-needs a-a-at n-n-night....."
"What kind of stupid thing did your father actually tell you!"
Glen hollered but Sayuri continued.
"B-B-B-B-B-Be-sides, if it's for your sake, Glen-sama, I-I-I'll do it..... so, there won't be a need for you to use any porn mags....."
"Just get out of here already moron!"
In response to Glen's words, Shigure, who was beside Sayuri, merely said quietly.
"Hey Sayuri."
"Yes."
"Don't worry. There aren't any porn mags in that box. They are research books on sorcery."
"Eh?"
"There's no way our master would read those low-class porn mags right? Glen-sama is someone who's so busy with his intense training that he has no time for such things."
On hearing those words, Sayuri's face brightened up instantly,
"T-That's right! Just what I would expect of Glen-sama!"
"....."
"But if you do have those needs, do let me know in advance. I-I do need some time to get mentally prepared after all."
"....."
Following that, Shigure said.
"All right, I'll start cleaning up the room. Sayuri, you....."
"Yeah, I'll make dinner. Glen-sama, what'll you like to eat?"
Even though nothing had been resolved yet, the two of them started acting as if the conversation had already ended.
While feeling exasperated at his two retainers who only knew how to rebel against him,
"..... curry."
He merely replied.
"Got it!"
Sayuri responded joyfully, and with that, the two of them who were already bent

on living in this unit started moving briskly.
"..... haah."
Glen took a deep sigh tiredly.
Still sitting on the sofa, he then took out his cellphone. He called home. After a few rings, the other party picked up.
"Glen huh."
On the other end of the phone was the man who was head of the Ichinose House. In other words, it was Glen's father.
Glen replied to his father.
"Yeah, it's me."
"How're things over there?"
"My retainers aren't listening to me."
"Haha, I ordered them not to."
"Don't go about giving unnecessary orders."
"And? How's school?"
On hearing his father's question, Glen recalled what had happened today.
About having a cola thrown at him as early as while he was commuting to school, and about Hiiragi Shinya.
And also, about Mahiru at school. About how he thought that his father was probably hiding Mahiru's engagement status from himself.
He recalled all those things,
"Nothing special."
"I see. Nothing special huh."
"Yeah."
"Well, you are strong, unlike me."
"You are stronger, Dad. I'm just short-tempered."
"Haha..... I see. But, if the time comes when you need help....."
But, Glen cut him off and said.
"No problem. If I can't overcome such a thing, I can't call myself the next head of Ichinose right?"
"Is that so..... as your father, I would want to help you but, you are a son who has surpassed his father."
"There's no way such a thing could happen. Anyway, how're things on your side?"
"As usual. Don't worry."
"I see. Then it's fine. I'm going to hang up."
"All right. Glen."
"Hn?"
"Be careful."
His father said. Glen then nodded,
"Got it. See ya."
"Yeah."
With that, the call ended.
Judging that the call had ended, Shigure asked.
"Glen-sama."
"Hn?"

"Do you have anything you want me to unpack first?"
Glen turned towards Shigure and replied.
"No, just leave my stuff. Go unpack your own stuff."
"But."
"Aah, then, unpack the luggage in the room beside the entrance hall first. Since those contain sorcery tools."
"Understood."
Shigure bowed, and with small brisk steps, she headed into the room beside the entrance hall.
Glen looked intently at that petite back, then called out to Sayuri who was in the kitchen.
"Hey Sayuri."
"Yes, what is it?"
"How long before dinner's ready?"
"Erm, if you are okay with not letting it simmer, it'd take around an hour....."
"I see. An hour huh."
"Do you want it faster?"
"No, let it simmer. I will take a nap in the adjacent unit."
Upon saying that, Glen stood up. He then grabbed the long, black bag that was placed in a corner of the living room.
In this bag was a so-called Japanese sword.
The Ichinose House is primarily a house that had developed as one which combined sword skills with the use of sorcery, and when it came to just the use of the sword, they should not lose to the Hiiragi House.
Thus, if Glen did not use his katana, he could not utilize his full strength, but, he had no intention of drawing his katana from its scabbard in school.
He had planned to graduate without showing his true strength --- without showing the growth of Ichinose's sorcery to the Hiiragis.
However, he still needed to train.
Thus he grabbed the bag which was fashioned to be carried over the shoulder, in which the sword was kept. Extinguished his presence. So that Sayuri and Shigure were unable to notice his movements.
"....."
With that, he exited the unit.
He was heading to the floor above.
The Ichinose House should have completely modified a single unit on the floor above into a training ground. So he was heading towards that unit.
He advanced to the elevator from the entrance. and pressed the button for the elevator.
In this condominium, there were two layers of automatic locks; only a resident of the condo or someone who was granted access by a resident could take the elevator and they could only exit the elevator on the floor which they had access to but yet, someone was in the elevator that came up.
By the way, this condo had 27 floors.
And right now, Glen was on the 25th floor. Furthermore, the floor above, the 26th

floor, was completely rented by the Ichinose House, and the 27th floor above that was where the owner of the building and his family lived.
And right now, there was a man inside the elevator.
A man in a black suit, roughly in his early 20s.
The only ones who could come up till this floor would either be the people of the Ichinose House, or the owner's family who was living on the 27th floor.
Glen looked at the man.
The man smiled, bowed, and asked,
"Good evening, are you going up?"
Glen nodded and said.
"Yeah, that's right. Are you going to the 27th floor?"
The man grinned and nodded.
"Yes."
"Then, you are with the owner's family?"
"That's right."
"Right. I see. We'll be looking forward to your acquaintance for the next 3 years."
"No no. It's us who are very pleased to have such a respectable tenant to stay with us."
He said.
Glen nodded, and got on the elevator. He turned around. He then looked at the floor selection buttons of the elevator.
The owner's floor, the 27th floor, was not selected. Rather, none of the floors were selected.
In other words, the destination floor of this man, was the 25th floor which Glen was at right now. But yet, this man lied and pretended to be with the owner's family.
And he even made a lie which would be found out the moment Glen entered the elevator.
Which meant, this man was,
"An assassin huh."
Glen lowered his body. He immediately tore open the bag he was shouldering, threw it away, and drew his katana from its scabbard. It should be a difficult thing to draw a katana in such a tight space, but he was already used to it.
The ability to use his swords wherever he was under any circumstances had been drilled into him since young.
The man reacted too. Rather, it seemed as if he was prepared, waiting for this moment. He brought out something from his pocket. He immediately knew that they were chains the instant his katana struck against them.
The chains were bounded by several charms.
He had never seen those charms before.
At the very least, they were not charms used by the Hiiragis.
The charms used by the Hiiragis were developed in sophistication based on Vajrayana and Onmyōdō, with elements of various sorcery science found throughout the world introduced into them; and the Ichinoses who had the same origin, could decipher them to a certain extent.

However, the charm used by the man was fundamentally of a different kind from those of the Hiiragi House and Ichinose House. It was probably based on Western Europe wizardry. Kabbalah or perhaps something else? It seemed like ancient Japanese sorcery techniques were mixed into it but --- anyway Glen was unable to decipher it.
The man tried to bind Glen's katana with those chains which had those strange charms attached to them.
Glen kicked the man's stomach with his foot, and prevented him from pulling his katana. He further went on to touch the sleeve of his school uniform with the fingers of his left hand. He then pulled out a talisman that had been tucked in there, and completed the Kuji gestures with his fingers.
Instantly, the talisman burst and disappeared, and at the same time, a flash of lightning appeared right before the man's eyes.
It was different than the spell used by Shinya on Glen this morning. Compared to what Shinya used, the one by Glen was faster, smoother, and possessed the power to kill a person.
The man's eyes widened. Little ghosts of lightning popped out and were about to pierce through those wide open eyes.
If the opponent was a normal person, his eyes would probably be crushed.
But Glen did not stop moving. He aimed at the man's neck with his drawn katana.
"Haha, ha, amazing..... no mercy at all."
While saying that, the man lifted his right arm.
However, Glen did not care and continued swinging his katana.
His swing was so fierce that it would not just sever the foe's arm, but also his neck.
But, *Kihn*, the high-pitched sound of what seemed to be metal clashing against metal rang out, and the katana was stopped.
It struck the bone of the man's arm. But if that was a human being's arm, it should have been severed. No, even if it were protected by iron armor, Glen was confident of cutting it apart.
But the katana stopped.
The man looked at Glen and smiled.
His eyes were not crushed. And at that moment, from the flesh of the arm that was cut, black smoke spouted and as if it possessed a will of its own, it started thrusting towards Glen.....
"Damn, I'm disadvantaged in such a narrow place."
Glen immediately drew back. He jumped out of the elevator. At the same when he exited, he took out a few talismans from his pocket, and threw them. They stuck to the four corners of the elevator entrance, and created a barrier.
A barrier that would kill anyone who stepped out.
With that, he sheathed his katana back into its scabbard. He shifted his scabbard to the belt around his waist, and adopted an Iai pose.
Then, he said to the man in black suit inside the elevator. With a grin on his face, "Now ~, come out. I will detach your head in my next draw."
But the man did not come out.

He merely smiled in delight, and using his dangling cut arm in a dexterous manner, he pressed the 「open」 button to hold the elevator door open.
The man then looked hard at Glen and said.
"My, as expected of the candidate successor of the Ichinose House. Scary..... to think that you can cut a human being who just happened to board the same elevator without any hesitation.....
Glen looked hard at the arm that was spouting black smoke, and replied.
"Screw you, you aren't any human right?"
"Haha, that's upsetting."
"But you are no vampire either. Those creatures have no interest in humans."
"....."
"In that case, you must be an assassin sent by someone..... were you sent by the Hiiragi House?"
The man then grinned and opened both his hands,
"How smart....."
But Glen cut him off and said.
"Don't f**k with me. The enchantments on your chains don't belong to the Hiiragis. Besides, the Hiiragis won't send assassins just for the sake of killing people of the Ichinose House which they had been ridiculing. Now speak, who the hell are you?"
Glen then went on to lower his body. He gathered the strength to draw his katana into his whole body. Powerful enchantments had been imbued into the scabbard beforehand, and in order to invoke them, Glen kept twirling his ring finger and little finger again and again, inscribing the curse verses. Before long, all the curse verses were completed. It was a curse so powerful that it painted the blade which it was placed in red.
Glen then said.
To the man,
"If you don't tell the truth, I'll kill you, you know?"
The man then looked intently at Glen and replied.
"Aah, you saw through me that fast huh. I see. You are more capable than I thought....."
But in the midst of those words, Glen drew out his sword.
Rather, he never had the intention to talk right from the beginning. This fellow would not tell the truth anyway. When Glen asked whether he was an assassin sent by the Hiiragi House, he judged based on his lie that it was meaningless to talk with him.
So he unsheathed his sword.
The man's face turned into surprise for an instant.
But that was just an instant.
The katana came in from below the right side of the man's trunk. It immediately struck his rib. *Kiiiiihn*, like just now when he cut his arm, the sound of the katana blade bouncing off metal could be heard, but,
"Cut throuuuuugh it!"
Glen shouted. The red blade trembled, and with that it cut upwards. Slicing

through the rib, it exited from the top of the left shoulder.
If he did not die from that, he would be a true monster.
Then.
"Haha."
The man looked at him and laughed.
He was really a monster.
From the cut torso, black smoke and chains wrapped in charms that he had never seen before came flying out, attempting to restrain Glen.
Once again, Glen tried to retreat back out of the elevator.
But his right arm, which was holding onto the katana, was caught. Looking hard at that, he thought. Should he detach the joint of his arm? But if he did that, his katana would be taken away from him. Then, should he ignore the chains once again and try to cut him?
However, was it the right choice to continue battling his foe inside the cramped elevator while he had yet to get a good grasp of his opponent's abilities?
Especially about that black smoke.
The chains were fine. Since he could more or less tell its capabilities. But he could not tell what kind of power the smoke possessed. At any rate, it would not seem good if he breathe in any of that. That was why during the battle inside the elevator, Glen had never taken a breath.
The man then said.
"You are truly amazing. You should already be rendered motionless by the poison in the smoke but yet..... you held your breath during our fight?"
Glen glared at his enemy and said.
"I don't want the praise of someone who can still jump around with a split torso after receiving my curse."
"Ah-haha, this is amazing right?"
Once again, the man laughed in delight as he spread his hands. Both the chains and smoke were squirming in mid-air as if they had a body and a will of their own.
Glen looked hard at them and said.
"Who the hell are you?"
"Who do you think I am?"
"A monster."
"Haha, despite what you see, I'm a full-fledged human."
He said.
Glen then scowled at those words,
"Human..... human huh. Which means that you have been modified into a **Chimera**Remodeled Combatant through human experimentation?"
The man smiled and replied.
"Yeah. The Ichinoses --- the people of 『Mikado no Tsuki』 also do something like this right?"
But Glen shook his head.
"I don't know about the Hiiragis, but we don't. In the first place, even without human experimentation, I'm stronger than you bastard."

"Ah-haha, maybe."
"And? Enough of your show. Who the hell are you? Which organization do you belong to, and what's your purpose for coming here?"
Maybe it was because the man felt like answering honestly, he concealed his chains in his body, and even the smoke subsided. No, at the same time, even the cut-up suit had its tears closed up. Glen did not know what kind of setup was behind all that. Was that suit part of the body, or was it a separate thing?
Maybe during the next time when I attack, I should try using a fire spell to burn that smoke? Glen considered in his head.
At that moment, the man said his name.
"Well then, let me first tell you my name. My name is Kijima Makoto. I am with the 《Hyakuya Church》."
"《Hyakuya Church》?"
Glen murmured and narrowed his eyes on hearing that name.
《Hyakuya Church》 was the name of a considerably large sorcery organization that was said to be supported by a secret division of the country.
Though many ordinary folk were unaware of this, 《Hyakuya Church》 was a large organization that could be said to have supported this country from the shadows, with many politicians having received aid from it.
Throughout the ages, whenever the seat of power of the nation changed, the 《Hyakuya Church》 and the Hiiragi House, which was also a large-scale sorcery organization would repeatedly engage in skirmishes to determine who would become the backer of the ruling power; but, since the second world war, the 《Hyakuya Church》, having received the support of America, had become the backbone sorcery organization of this country.
Rumor had it that they would do anything to acquire power and influence.
Murder.
Kidnapping.
War.
And, human experimentation.
The terrible stories about how the children of the orphanages run by 《Hyakuya Church》 were treated were especially famous.
It was said that the parents of children with special talents were killed, the children were then assembled in the orphanages and terrible experiments were conducted on them repeatedly.
Maybe this man was also one of the monsters who were created from such an orphanage.
"I'm not interested."
"Haha, you're such a liar."
"So, what on earth do you want today? Are you trying to test my loyalty?"
Putting aside Hiiragi Shinya, why is this guy also trying to involve me in going against the Hiiragi House? This is only the first day of school you know?
Glen made a wry smile to himself.
Kijima then said.

"I checked up on your past."
"Don't do that without my permission duh."
"You are feeling a deep rage towards your current situation."
"Hoarh. And?"
"No offense meant, but with your powers alone, you have no hope of crushing the Hiiragi House."
"Heyh. And so?"
"But with us....."
But Glen cut him off,
"I'm not interested. Besides, even if I'm interested, I won't join you."
Kijimi then looked hard at Glen and said.
"Why is that so?"
Glen then grinned and replied.
"Since a long time ago, I've always liked the first prize. But if I join you, you guys will take the first prize right?"
"....."
"And then, the next time, the 《Hyakuya Church》 will be ridiculing the Ichinoses, isn't it? Don't f**k with me. We're done here, now disappear."
"....."
"Or should I erase your existence by killing you?"
With that, Glen once again gripped the sword in its scabbard.
Kijima then smiled.
"You can't....."
"I can win. If I really intend to kill you, I won't go easy next time."
"....."
"I'll definitely kill off anyone who has seen my true power. But I'll wait for 5 seconds. Go back. Go back and tell your higher ups that the Ichinoses won't change sides. I'm going to start counting now. Five....."
"....."
"Four....."
At that moment, he tightened his grip on his katana hilt.
With his consciousness, he touched the sealed portion of Kujakumaru --- a katana that would emit and give rise to a red curse aura originating from sorcery.
"Three....."
At that moment, Kijima's initial relaxed attitude disappeared from his face.
"Aah, damn, what the heck. You're completely different from before..... It's not a bluff huh. I got it. I'll be taking my leave here....."
"Two....."
"....."
Kijima then shrugged his shoulders, and pressed the 'close' button of the elevator.
The elevator door started closing. In the midst of it, he said.
"But, you'll definitely regret not joining us....."
"One."
But at that moment, the elevator started descending. Kijima was gone.
Glen looked intently at the elevator,

"..... hah. 《Hyakuya Church》 huh. Will there be a war in the near future?"
Glen said with a small sigh as his hand left his katana.
And if that were to happen, then the chance of crushing the Hiiragis might appear, he thought.
That was how large the scale of 《Hyakuya Church》 was. It was rumored that their power had even spread to other countries. If that 《Hyakuya Church》 and 『Mikado no Oni』 clashed against each other, then during confusion, the possibility of the 『Mikado no Tsuki』 claiming supremacy might ---
At that moment, a voice sounded from the entrance.
"Glen-sama! Glen-sama!"
It was the voice of Sayuri. She was strangely in a fluster for some reason. *Patah patah*, the sounds of her running could be heard, and before long, she found Glen.
"Ah, there you are! Glen-sama! It'd be troubling if you just go out like that without letting us know!"
"Ah ~, no, I was just about to go to the training ground....."
Then, from behind Sayuri, Shigure said.
"We haven't finished cleaning up the training ground yet. We'll be done with it tomorrow, so please just rest easy today."
"Hm. Well, you're right. I'm a little tired today. How's the curry?"
On hearing his question, a shocked expression suddenly appeared on Sayuri's face,
"Ah, I've left the stove on!"
She rushed back into the room.
Shigure turned around and stared after her, then turned back to look at Glen, at the katana at his waist, and said.
"Did you draw your katana here?"
"Hn? Ah ~, that's right. This elevator waiting area is pretty spacious."
"Then, shall I prepare this area for you to train until tomorrow? It's also troublesome to keep going up each time."
"Aah, that'd be great. Please do that."
Glen wrapped his katana with the bag that was lying on the floor, and started walking.
Shigure then said.
"Glen-sama."
"Hn?"
"Did something happen?"
Glen then turned around, grinned at the somewhat worried-looking Shigure, and replied.
"Nothing. It's the usual."

Chapter 4 - Reunion of the Two

The school days passed like a flash.

Each day was fundamentally a day of getting ridiculed.
During sorcery tests.
During paired practices.
In all the subjects, Glen continuously lost to the students who were skilled in Hiiragi sorcery.

In the schoolyard.
A practice session involving the whole school was taking place.
"Guah."
Glen was struck with a solid blow and fell.
The one who hit him was a guy by the name of Goshi Norito.
With hair bleached blond, and frivolous drooping eyes.
He was Glen's classmate, of the Goshi House, and no doubt an elite.
Goshi looked hard at Glen and grinned.
"Jeez, with such a weak opponent, this can't even be considered a training."
The students encircling Goshi all laughed together.
"Rather, the hand I used got dirty, which is a pain in the ass."
"Why don't we tell Sensei? We should tell her that everyone's going to have a low morale with such a guy like that in our class."
Goshi nodded and said.
"Yeah, we should do that. In the first place, it's really weird that a weak guy like him got assigned to a class full of elites."
Glen sat up and looked at them. He used his fingers to wipe the corner of his cut lip where he was hit.
Then, a girl standing behind him said to him.
"Hey, don't you feel vexed when they said that about you?"
Turning around, he saw a girl with red hair standing there. It was Jyuujou Mito.
For some reason, she was glaring at him with a strangely irritated face,
"In the first place, you weren't seriously fighting right? I kind of felt that you were unmotivated right from the beginning knowing that your opponent is too strong and you can't win."
Glen smiled and said in response.
"But the opponent is the eldest son of the Goshi House you know? There's way someone like me can win....."
But, those words made Mito's eyes turned up suddenly for some reason.
"You don't know anything about the Jyuujou House, but you actually know the second-rated Goshi House, what is the meaning of that!?"
It seemed like he had touched some other raw nerve.
Maybe it was because he had heard that, Goshi said.
"Ah? Who are you calling second-rate?"
"Eh?"
"Screw you Jyuujou, don't get ahead of yourself? This is the only time you Jyuujou House can remain full of yourselves. Once I become the head of Goshi, I'll crush you right away."
On hearing that, Mito smiled mockingly, and took a step forward. She then puffed

out her small chest,
"Oh my, did I hit the bull's eye about you being second-rated and made you angry, Goshi-san?"
"Huuh? I'm going to kill you you know? I won't hold back just because you're a girl."
"Then try me. I'll show you the difference in level between the Jyuujou House and the Goshi House."
"I'll kiiiiiiiiiiillllll you!"
"Try me!"
And the two of them fought.
Their movements were considerably fast. Their invocation speeds were also pretty fast. The other students who could only call themselves elites in name, were also overwhelmed by their battle.
The teacher did not stop them.
Instead, she told the students to watch how they fight and study them.
And then,
"....."
While looking at them with vacant eyes, Glen stood up. He sighed tiredly.
Upon doing that, from behind him, with his arms folded, his eyes on the fight, Hiiragi Shinya called out to Glen.
"Yaah ~, it has been hard on you to put up an act of getting hit."
Glen looked at Shinya, and after that,
"....."
Without answering anything, he turned his eyes to the fight between Mito and Goshi.
He searched for something useful he could learn from the battle between the two who were at the pinnacles of Hiiragi sorcery.
But Shinya came up beside him and said.
"With your level, you can't learn anything from watching them right?"
"....."
"I've been watching you for the past 10 days, and you seem pretty good at taking hits. In a way that would avoid taking damage, and yet, you would be blown away so flashily....."
But Glen cut him off and said.
"Are you stalking me? Stop looking at me."
"Ah-haha."
Shinya laughed in delight.
"No but, I'd really love to know the real strength of my future comrade in crushing the Hiiragis."
"I'm not your comrade."
"Well well, why don't we spar a bit? It's about time to show me your real strength."
Shinya unfolded his arms. And aimed his fist at Glen.
Instantly, he could tell that the students surrounding them had turned their attention to them. Even Mito and Goshi who had been fighting stopped.

That was how much attention Shinya commanded in this school, and on top of that, his real strength was a head above the crowd.
After all, during the first paired practice in this school, Shinya defeated Goshi with just one hand.
That very Shinya aimed his fist at him and said.
"By the way, I'm going all out. No matter how strong you are, I'd think that it's impossible for you to go easy on me. No matter how skillful you are at taking hits, you'll end up with some broken bones, won't you?"
Glen looked at that fist of Shinya. He then looked up at Shinya's face, grinned, and said.
"Erm, Shinya-sama. I don't think I have enough of ability to be your opponent though....."
"Shut up, and just fight me."
Shinya moved. A spell swirled around his fist. Clearly, it was a means of summoning demon gods to latch on to him. Was that the Vajrayaksa Curse? Or something else altogether?
Anyway, he was serious in hitting him. And furthermore, with the intent to kill.
If Glen did not react, and deal with it appropriately, he might just die.
And then,
"Aah, damn..... it can't be helped."
Glen said to the fist,
"Guah."

A spell swirled around his fist.
He took it right in the chest. The sound of a broken rib was heard. His body went flying in the air. And fell. As it took some time before he reached the ground, he must have been sent flying pretty high in the air.
His consciousness was fuzzy. That was how powerful Shinya's spell-accelerated force was.
"You're kidding me ~. How stubborn can you be? Or, could it be that you're really weak?"

Shinya said as he looked down at him in surprise.
Following that, Mito rushed up to Glen for some reason,
"S-Sensei! Bl-Blood is coming out of Ichinose-kun's mouth!?"
She yelled.
But the teacher did not move. She merely grinned as she looked down at him.
On top of that, he heard voices saying, *"as expected, the ability of one from the Hiiragi House is way too different"*.
Mito's expression then became one of disgust, and she said,
"Hey, what on earth are you guys thinking of.....?"
Following that, Goshi, who had hit Glen and smirked at him earlier came up,
"Hey, the way this blood is flowing out, it looks seriously awful doesn't it?"
He said.
But that should not have been the case. Glen had shifted his body at an angle where his vitals should have escaped injury even if a rib broke after getting hit --- but still, his consciousness was fuzzy.
Maybe he messed up a little.
Goshi then said.
"Hey hey hey, someone bring this guy to the infirmary....."
But, at that moment, Glen completely lost consciousness and could no longer hear his voice.

♦

When Glen opened his eyes again, he found himself in a place that looked like a hospital room.
White ceiling.
White walls.
He got up from a bed in that room.
His upper body was naked, wrapped around with several layers of bandages. His chest throbbed in pain. But it was probably not a lethal injury. Then why did he lose consciousness?
"....."
Glen took off the bandages and looked at his wound. The color of his skin on more than half of his chest was blue-black. It seemed like a thick blood vessel beneath it was cut. He lost consciousness because of the lack of blood. There was a sign of an incision on his skin. His blood vessel had probably been tied up.
"..... hm."
Glen nodded to himself as he recognized this.
Then,
"This is not the time to go 'hm'."
A voice sounded outside the infirmary.
A girl's voice.
A girl's voice which he had heard before.
Glen looked in that direction. And there, outside the open door, stood a girl.
Beautiful ashen hair, eyes with black irises.

It was Mahiru.
Hiiragi Mahiru.
She stared at him with a troubled face. With a face that seemed to say she was not sure of what to say at seeing her childhood friend after a long time, she looked intently at him, and said,
"..... you can't just take off the bandages without permission."
Glen pondered about the attitude that he should adopt towards her, and then said,
"Isn't this..... Mahiru-sama..... it's been a while."
And he bowed his head.
On saying that, he could see a small shock reflecting from the depths of her eyes.
And she then said.
"Aah, so this is how it goes."
"I beg your pardon?"
"You aren't talking to me the way you used to."
Glen then answered.
"The situation was different."
"....."
"I'm no longer the ignorant kid I used to....."
But Mahiru cut him off and said.
"Enough of that. Keep quiet."
Glen kept quiet as she ordered. A tinge of anger colored her voice.
Mahiru came into the room.
Glen then said to her.
"Mahiru-sama, your father will be angry if you get close to a person like me."
Mahiru then smiled. Different from the past, it was not just an innocent smile, but a beautiful smile that was tinged with a fleeting sorrow.
"I'm also different from the past. I can make my own decisions. It is the duty of the head house, my duty as a member of the Hiiragis, to worry about the people of the subordinate houses."
She said.
By the way, the Ichinose House had split from the main house and created their own denomination, so strictly speaking, they were not subordinate to the Hiiragi House, but still, Mahiru had probably elected to use those words despite knowing that.
Glen looked up at Mahiru's face. As before, she seemed a little angry.
But he said nothing.
Rather, right now, he did not possess the power that would allow him to say anything to her.
The reason was because nothing had changed since then.
Since the relationship and the circumstances between the Hiiragis and the Ichinoses had not changed.
He then recalled the event that occurred 10 days ago.
He remembered the words of the messenger from the 《Hyakuya Church》.

--- don't you want the power to crush the Hiiragis?

Despite recalling that, Glen said nothing.
Mahiru then said to him.
"..... it has really been a long time, but you won't say anything to me?"
Glen replied.
"There's nothing I have to say."
"....."
Mahiru kept quiet again.
An uncomfortable silence went by in the infirmary, and because of that, they noticed the presence of a clock in the room.
Tock tock tock, unable to bear the strangely loud ticking sounds of the second needle, Mahiru began.
"How's your injury?"
Glen replied.
"No problem."
"I've heard that the appraisal on you..... has been awfully low, but is that for real?"
"If that's what they reported, then it's the truth I suppose."
Mahiru looked hard at Glen.
But he did not know what she wanted to say for now. He did not know what he wanted from her.
No, he did not, but he could not do anything about it.
After these 10 years of separation, regardless of how strong he had grown, the gap between the Hiiragi House and the Ichinose House had not changed. And if that did not change, then the gap between him and her would not change at all.
And she should know that too.
Glen looked up,
"Mahiru-sama, you've become strong, and beautiful over these 10 years, haven't you?"
He said.
On hearing that, Mahiru became surprised for an instant, then smiled happily.
"And a thug like you has learned how to flatter people?"
"It's not flattery....."
"But I'm happy to hear you telling me that I'm beautiful, I guess."
She said.
She pouted her lips in slight embarrassment. Glen looked up at her face but his expression did not change.
"And is there anything you need from me?"
He asked.
On hearing that, her expression turned sad again.
"..... no, I'm just here to ask about your injury."
"Sorry for worrying you. I'm already all right."
"..... is that so?"
"Will there be anything else?"
"....."

Mahiru then shook her head. And as before, she said sorrowfully.
"Nothing."
"I see."
"Yeah. Well then, sorry for disturbing you."
Mahiru looked intently at him, then turned around. Facing her back to him.
And then, Glen said to her back.
"Aah, I forgot. I've heard from Shinya-sama about your engagement. Congratulations."
He could tell from her back that she quivered. Her feet stopped, and then,
"Thank you."
She said without turning around.
And Mahiru left the infirmary.
Glen stared in the direction of the door from where she had disappeared.
He stared straight ahead.
With a dull face, he stared hard at the empty space, at the white wall,
"..... damn. I'm such a jerk."
He said in a groaning tone.

Chapter 5: War and Supermarket

“Nooow then now then, from tomorrow there will finally be the start of the weekly Academic Acceleration Examinations!” The female teacher says as she writes on the blackboard.

The Academic Acceleration Examinations is in summary, “that”. It seems to be an exam where students fight their fellows directly, and decides who is superior.

Of course as a consequence of that, you cannot say that the results of it are already decided. However, points can be considerably weighted during their consideration. Having been informed of that, the rabble of the class got excited.

When they do, Shinya speaks up from where he was seated next to me.

“That's great, huh... that way those guys who don't fight seriously and would have to drop out of school can be at ease.”

Guren turns to look at Shinya,

“I feel that those who would want to take me out with one shot are getting impatient, though?”

“Haha, that's because you can't avoid that stuff. Speaking of, did you really not avoid my attacks?” Shinya asks, looking back towards Guren.

“To receive those, you have to be quite an idiot, or...”

“Trash with no true ability? For your information, I'm the latter. You're buying into my strength too much.”

“--someone who can say that about themselves is scary, or at least that's been my own experience up until now.”

“You're too cautious. Right right, you think there's a monster that can compete with you? Aren't someone that the Hiiragi House-- that Mahiru chose?”

“...”

“But, at the very least I wasn't chosen. That one thing that you are very concerned about, doesn't concern me. Am I wrong?” Guren states.

In response to that Shinya laughs.

“You know, if that really wasn't an act, it makes you incredibly negative.”

“I was born that way.”

“Haha, I wonder what exactly Mahiru liked about someone like you?” Shinya wonders to himself.

Guren looks at Shinya, then once again turns to look towards the teacher.

The teacher was still explaining the Academic Acceleration Examination.

It was a talk about how there has not been one drop-out in this class, and how according to the number of people who drop out, the teacher's grading will change, so everyone try your best.

It was then Shinya spoke, “Ah, by the way, you met with Mahiru?”

“...”

“Well, how was it? Were you able to be friendly with her?”

In that moment Guren responds to Shinya without looking at him,

“Not really.”

“Aah, there's no particular need to take my feelings into consideration. Since while I may be that girl's fiance, but I am not her lover.”

“...”

“Incidentally, tell me something. After you met up with her, she was strangely a little cross. What happened?”

It seems that after that happened, Mahiru and Shinya met up somehow. At those words, Guren smiles a little and responds.

“She was disappointed at how weak I was.”

Shinya looks at Guren with an astounded expression.

“You really are incredibly negative after all.”

“Is that so? If you don't like it, it's fine to stop talking to me?”

“Haha.” Shinya smiles with amazement.

Guren ignores it.

The female teacher is writing on the blackboard again.

“Make sure you absolutely do not lose to the people from the other classes! That is all!”

It is then the bell signalling the end of homeroom chimes.

All of the students simultaneously rise.

There are people going home. People talking to friends. People staying behind to clean the classroom. This school had no club activities. If you had the free time to do that sort of stuff, as everyone here was concerned with magic, you would go to training.

Since homeroom was over, Guren grabs his bag hanging on the side of his desk and rises.

At that, Shinya asks from his side, “Ah, shall we go home together?”

“Die.” Guren declines politely.

He looks towards the classroom exit. He knows that his two attendants are already there, stealthily concealing themselves while watching him.

He spots Sayuri.

“Ah, ah, Guren-sama!” She says while waving at him.

Shigure is at her side, “Wait a moment, as he said he'd kill us if we stood out, he's going to get angry again.”

She tries to control Sayuri as best she can. Guren bows his head.

In the end those two really do stand out after all.

“I'll lecture you later...” Guren mutters.

At that, Jujo Mito, who was in the classroom, gives them a sharp look.

“Honestly, to even bring along two women as attendants, the people of the

Ichinose house are utterly craven, aren't they.”

At that, the students laugh.

Subsequently, Goshi Norito speaks up.

“It's true, it's true. Not only that, they're both beauties. For the time being, introduce me to them a little.” He says, while approaching.

The students then all look like they're not sure if they should laugh or not.

Generally speaking, in this class, Hiiragi Shinya, Jujo Mito, and Goshi Norito, who all have ability and good pedigree, are together in being ranked within the top four.

The other person ranked in the top four was called Sanguu Aoi, a girl from the Sanguu household, but she was quiet and always went straight home when class was over.

Setting that aside, the three people from distinguished powerful houses were strangely over-familiar and close with Guren, so the other students didn't know what kind of attitude was good to take at the moment.

Of course, the students from the other classes, the upperclassmen, and the teacher's attitudes, had not changed from the start, so the amount he was harassed hadn't decreased.

As always, Goshi's face is frivolous as he drew close.

“Hey, Ichinose. Are you going out with one of two from your house or something?” He asks, and Guren turns to look at Goshi.

“What's this, I thought you wouldn't want to go out with one of the people from the filthy Ichinose house?”

“Beauties are different.”

“What kind of logic is that.”

“It's fine, so tell me. Those two, are like “that” right? Attendants who directly handle you? Which is to say, they do “that”? They even attend to you at night?”

In that moment Mito's face goes red and she raises her voice indignantly.

“Wait a minute, Goshi, you vulgar man! Will you not stop that indecent talk in the classroom?!”

Additionally, Sayuri also pipes up from outside the classroom,

“T-that's right! Guren-sama has yet to make a move on me!” She shouts with an

angry face.

“...”

At that moment, the class falls silent.

Goshi's face becomes heated. Mito looks at me like she just saw some outrageous beast.

And Shinya, while smiling like he'd enjoying himself, speaks up.

“Hey, Guren. This conversation we're having right now, is it okay for Mahiru to know about it?”

Guren, who looks like he's had enough of this, just sighs and walks out of class.

“Haah... I'm going home already.”

From behind him, Goshi says, “Oi, Ichinose. Your social standing of being Ichinose is pretty sly. Let me join in and be buds that play around with the ladies, too.”, and is ignored.

Guren exits the classroom.

Shigure looks up at him, “Um, I will lecture Sayuri...”

“Naturally.” Guren responds.

“Eh? Eh?” Sayuri says with a face that doesn't understand and eyes swirling. Guren ignores it and tries to head home.

However, as soon as Guren exits the classroom into the corridor, he realizes it won't be that easy.

It is right after he reaches the other end of the corridor, that he understands that there's a strong bloodthirstiness aimed right at him.

“...”

However, Guren pretends he does not notice that thirst.

He continues on with the act that he is weak, has no power, and is an idiot.

Of course, his attendants had noticed. Sayuri and Shigure both were products of training to protect Guren, the big guns.

Which is why they both would react to that thirst for blood.

However, “Don't move. I can benefit from this,” Guren quietly orders them.

“Eh? But,” Shigure, who was on my right, raises her voice and protests hotly.

But it was too late, someone's foot collides with the right side of Guren's head.

“Guh!”

He drops, and clumsily falls to the ground. He rolls. Then he glances up while holding his head, looking at what kicked him. Doing so, he sees there is one man with a number of followers.

He has brown hair, and narrow eyes like a snake. His lips are pierced. He looks down on me like I am an idiot, and speaks.

“Ah, sorry sorry. My foot slipped.”

His followers laugh at that moment.

“You bastard!” Shigure yells angrily, and launches forward. Her fists were raised to hit the pierced man.

This would be where Guren should control her, however one of the supporters behind the pierced man, a girl student, seizes Shigure's fists.

Shigure is a little astonished. Of course she was. After all, her movements were rather quick just then.

Even so, that female student was able to stop her. Furthermore, she even speaks,

“Wait, do you even understand exactly what you are doing? This person here is Hiiragi Seishirou?”

Somehow it seems that this pierced man carries the name of Hiiragi. In this school, he was a human with such a high class pedigree that it would be fine to call him God.

The female student continues, “To even raise a fist to this Seishirou-sama, means certain death...”

Seishirou interrupts her.

“It's fine, Yumi. After all, for the idiots of the Ichinose, you need to speak straightforwardly. And you have to strike them to break them, like the animals they are.” He says, raising his hand.

Shigure reacts to that, and tries to swat away Seishirou's hand. However,

“Haha, you're slow, little woman.”

Seishirou's fist is faster. Which is to say, this guy's movement was that much overwhelmingly faster than Shigure's.

“Shit--” Guren exclaims, standing up to try and stop that Seishirou's fist. However at that moment, his fist had already stopped.

The reason for this is that someone has grabbed onto Seishirou's arm. Looking over, the one who had stopped it was Shinya, who had just exited the classroom. Just like that, Shinya speaks,

“Seishirou-sama... if you raise your hand in this place, to a weak woman from the Ichinose House, there will be gossip and you will hurt the family name.”

Seishirou glares at Shinya.

“Yeah? Who asked for the opinion of a bastard who has the social standing of being adopted.”

“... my apologies. However,”

“No 'however' about it.”

Seishirou raises his hand, and just like that, he swings it once again. His fist hits Shinya's face.

Shinya doesn't try to protect himself. He lets out a thick sound, and blood drips from Shinya's lips.

Seishirou laughs at that.

“Haha, that was a good call. After all, someone like you can't win against me.”

“...”

“Because you can make that call, you were chosen by Father to be Mahiru's partner. Be sure to keep that in mind.”

“...yes.”

“Also, since you're in the same class, tell me. These rats that come from the Ichinose house, are they strong? Though I know I'll win the second round of the Academic Acceleration Examination...”

In other words, that's how it is. That's why Seishirou came here. He came to see how strong Guren was before the examination.

And thus, Shinya responds, “... at first, I also thought that he may have some power... in any case, I suspected that if it was the candidate for the next Ichinose House Head, they may hold a degree of power.”

“Hm.”

Accordingly, Shinya looks down on me. His eyes are cruel and cold.

“I bought into it too much. Even when it seemed like his girl attendants were going to be hit... even when his friends seemed like they were going to be hit, he's trash that can't even move. In the end, he's a person from a second-rate fallen house.” He says, outrageously.

Seishirou laughs.

“Haha, what's this. So he's like that after all. It seems that people from the Ichinose house are always trash, huh. While I heard that even when his father attended this school, he trembled while walking in the corners of corridors... so you're the same, huh.”

At that, Seishirou's followers laugh once more.

Furthermore, the people from class had come into the corridor and were laughing at Guren. It may be due to how Shinya's attitude had changed, with how he was finally against Guren, so they now understood what kind of treatment was fine to give Guren.

Seishirou turns on his heel.

“Aah, whatever. This is boring. If they're weak, my desire to mess with them is also gone. Let's go.”

All the same, the students laugh. They laugh at the statement of how weak and incompetent the Ichinose are.

Nonetheless, Goshi, who had also entered the corridor, looks down on me with piteous eyes,

“My oh my, you really have become trash. As expected, someone who can't protect women is no good.”

Or so he said. Furthermore,

“You gave then utterly no resistance, and were called those kind of things, are you not at all frustrated?” Jujo Mito asks with an angry face.

Even so, Guren replies in a troubled way, “...when I left home, I was told not to defy the Hiiragi house...”

“In that case, would you die if they asked you to die!” For some reason, she begins shouting. And being in that state, dissatisfied with appearing angry, Mito leaves.

Guren vaguely watches her go, then stands. The students around him also begin to leave now that the strife is over.

Except one.

Only Shinya stayed behind, and looks towards me, before speaking.

“Somehow, you really are a boring guy, you know.”

“...”

“How disappointing, even though I had hopes for you.”

“...don't just expect things from people.”

“Yeah, you're right. It was my bad, for expecting anything from actual trash without any power.”

“...”

“Well whatever. Don't speak to me a second...”

Guren interrupts him at that, “You were the one who spoke to me.”

Shinya looks at Guren with cold eyes, and speaks.

“Yeah, you're right. Then, not just me, but don't approach Mahiru either.”

“...”

“You don't have the qualifications to do so. The point is, people who have no resolution or no power should not have come to this school. People who have nothing they've worked hard at... shouldn't have come to the school Mahiru is in.”

Essentially he's saying that someone who hasn't tried hard at anything has no right to stand in front of Mahiru, Guren thinks.

Someone with no power has no right to lift their head. In this world, getting your hands on what you want means having power.

In order to smile without worrying about a thing, means having power.

And, he still had no power. No power for himself. The power that had the extent to smash to Hiiragi House, he especially did not have.

Therefore, Guren responds,

“Then, what should I do? I'm also not returning home. I know that I don't have a place here. Even so, I was called out by you Hiiragi House people. Thus I acted accordingly. But even then, if you say that is no good, in what way can I make you happy? In what way can I be good?”

He dares to venture a complaint.

He said it, showing his own incompetence.

At that, Shinya stares at me with a face of someone who was completely fed up with this.

“...”

However, that is all. Without saying a word, he turns his back on me.

At that, Guren was left in the corridor with Shigure and Sayuri.

Now, no one was paying attention to Guren and the others any more.

He has returned to simply being trash. Returned to being a filthy Ichinose rat who does not interact with Shinya, Mito or Goshi.

It's then Shigure speaks up.

“F...for being completely weak... I apologize.”

Sayuri adds onto that with her own frustration, “B-but, was it really necessary for you to endure that much? Guren-sama, you really are...”

Guren speaks quietly, “Sayuri.”

At her name, Sayuri stops. She puts on something like an enduring face, but even while enduring it, a tear falls from Sayuri's eye.

“...”

Guren stares hard at it.

The circumstances were as such, that a subordinate was brought to tears because their master was made too much of a fool of.

“...I'm sorry.” Is all he can say.

At that, Sayuri gets flustered and shakes her head vigorously.

“Ah, ah, I... it is not that. It is just, dust in my eye...”

From her side, Shigure seems amazed, “Nowadays, that excuse cannot pass at all.”

“Weeh, but,”

“Yes yes, I understand. Your important master was perpetually mocked, I share your feelings on it.”

“Y...Yuki-chan...”

“But, please endure it. Our master is not crying, though it was surely more painful for him, so shouldn't it be preposterous that his attendants should cry before he does?”

“Weeeeh, but...”

“I will report this to your parents?”

“Wehhh”

“Now, stop your tears. Because we exist to protect and comfort Guren-sama.”

At Shigure's words, for some reason Sayuri's face clears and becomes bright as she cries.

“Ah, I see! In other words, tonight will be when we attend...”

“No!” Exclaims Shigure.

Guren smacks Sayuri's head lightly.

“Owie.”

Holding her head, Sayuri smiles at Guren.

“Well, in any case, that you're both so optimistic comforts me plenty. Now, let's go home.”

He pushes Sayuri's back and begins walking.

“Yes!” Both attendants respond.

However, Guren was already developing a new thought in his head. It had to do with the man he had just met. Hiiragi Seishirou.

He was likely a sibling related to Mahiru by blood, a person from the Hiiragi house.

While he had not heard that Mahiru had a twin brother, for them to be the same year in school must mean they were siblings with different mothers. This is what he thought about Seishirou.

He thought of Seishirou's movements.

He reproduced both Shinya's and Shigure's offence and defence in his head. Seishirou's movements were sharp. While he could not know how much power he had from one move, nonetheless,

“As expected from the Head House-- that's what it means to be Hiiragi.” Guren mutters quietly.

“Now then, to what extent will my power work here.”

That Seishirou said something about them being enemies in the second round of the Academic Acceleration Examinations. And the exam was starting tomorrow.

- - -

The sun sets.

The town is dyed red.

They are on the road home from school.

There aren't many people around, and there is a small supermarket located in the

middle of a residential neighbourhood.

While Sayuri and Shigure shop for dinner, Guren waits with his arms crossed, sitting on a guardrail.

And there,

“Saitou-san! Saitou-san! Is it really okay for me to buy any sweets I want?!” The voice of a happy, young boy can be heard.

Guren glances in the direction of the voice. As one would expect, there was a young boy there.

A boy with blond hair, and a fair-skinned, beautiful face. He was likely not Japanese. Or it was possible that he had foreign blood in his veins.

The boy speaks while smiling very happily.

“I wonder what I should buy to make everyone at the orphanage happy~? Hey Saitou-san, even if I buy ice cream, do you think that the Director wouldn't get mad?”

It was then the man named Saitou-san responds,

“I wonder. In that orphanage, is there a fridge...”

“Of course there's one.”

“Then it should be fine. Even the director should allow for sweets.”

“Yay!”

“There now, take this money and go to the supermarket. Will you be alright buying it yourself? Mikaela-kun.”

The boy called Mikaela responds to that question,

“Of course. What age do you think I am? I'm 8!” He smiles.

It was then Guren saw Saitou take out 10,000 yen.

“Eh, this much...” Mikaela exclaims, surprised.

Saitou smiles.

“It's for everyone after all.”

“But, is it really okay, to take 10,000yen...”

“It's fine, it's fine. Now go on.”

“Okay! But if it's going to be that many sweets, it would've been good to have brought Akane-chan with me...”

Having said that, the boy named Mikaela enters the supermarket with sparkling

eyes.

And thus,

“.....”

Guren watches that with his arms crossed. Once inside, Guren then switches to watch the man called Saitou.

Saitou wore a black suit.

The man who had attacked Guren ten days earlier, had worn the same black suit.

“.....”

He and that man had tried to kill each other in that elevator, as they were an assassin from the 'Hyakuya Church'.

“Saitou? Didn't you say to me that your name was Kijima?”

The assassin smiles cordially at that.

“At the orphanage, I go as the kind Saitou-san.”

“Hmm. So then is Kijima your real name?”

“I do not have a real name.”

“To put simply, you're an assassin?”

“Yes.”

“Then, at that orphanage, you like playing the role of Daddy Long-Legs?”

“Haha, that's what it looks like. Well then, knowing that I am such a kind Daddy Long-legs, have you become interested in hearing my story...”

“Nope.”

The assassin laughs at the interruption.

“Even so, please call me Saitou-san while we're here. If Mika-kun overheard, there'd surely be some confusion.” He says.

With that, Guren glances towards the supermarket where the boy named Mikaela had gone.

“And? You guys will use that kid, then what will you do?”

“What do you mean?”

“The Hyakuya Church is famous for their human experimentation. Don't go senile on me now.”

“No no, that is a huge misunderstanding. Even if the Hyakuya Church are demons, they administer the Hyakuya Orphanages as charitable work...”

“Then where did you come from?” Guren asks Saitou.

“Who did that thing to your body? Where did that happen? There's no way you're going to say something like that your parents raised you in good health and with love, riiight?”

“.....”

At that, Saitou stops smiling. He then replies in all seriousness,

“...you're right. It's certainly true that I came from the Hyakuya Orphanage. But I undertook laboratory testing on my own free will, and obtained this body.”

“Huh, so brainwashing.”

And yet, as expected Saitou continued on while Guren stares hardly at him.

“No, I seriously think that the Hyakuya Church wants to guide this country on the right path. While Guren-sama may not be aware of this, if Japan continues down this path, the trumpet of the end will drag us into decay.”

He says such strange things.

Still, Guren smiles and replies,

“Ha, so you've come out with it. The end days, huh? That's a signature move used against newcomers of a religion. If you do not believe, you won't survive the apocalypse? Even we use that kind of talk. So do the Hiiragi House. In the doctrine there's a component that resembles it. And? Using that, did you think you'd be able to solicit me?”

He says that, but Saitou's facial expression does not crumble. As expected, he's serious,

“That is not what I was talking about.”

“Then what is it.”

“In truth... if this continues, a virus will spread via an untouchable forbidden magic, who knows how much it will rampantly spread to, and the people of this world will find no place to live.”

“And, you're saying you guys are protecting us from that?”

“Yes.”

“That's why you are trying to get the sinful people who won't join the Hyakuya church, and therefore die from the virus, to hurry and join?”

But Saitou smiles and shakes his head at that.

“No, as I said, this is not that kind of religious conversation. I do not think that is the kind of conversation to have with you right now.”

“Ah? Then what kind of conversation is it?”

“This is a conversation about war. The one who made the virus is not God, but humans. And these are humans you know very well. The humans named, Hiiragi.”

“Wha, that's...”

Saitou ignores that and continues,

“The “Emperor's Demon” who stole the seat of the National Magic Organization from Hyakuya Church is running wild, no one can touch them as they practice forbidden magic. That's why, we are frantically working to protect.” Saitou smiles as he says that.

“Well? Don't you think we have common interests?”

What a thing to say. Saitou then presents his hand to Guren,

“That's why, won't you join forces with us? Before the word ends, let's strike a blow against the Hiiragi.”

Or so he says.

Guren looks at his hand.

He's said that the Hiiragi were going to destroy the world with forbidden magic they got their hands on, and that they were protecting everyone from it.

And then, in the dawn of the Hiiragi being destroyed,

“...will the position of the Ichinose House, rise?”

At that, Saitou smiles and nods his head.

“Of course. We will seize control of the current society and it will be noted what the position of the Hiiragi was, as well as both sides of the “Emperor's Demon” and the “Emperor's Moon”, and the names of houses which cooperated with the Hyakuya Church.”

“Hmm. Well, then what? You've been offering collaboration to all of the Ichinose--

no, all of the “Emperor's Moon”?”

“Of course.”

“Then why, why, are you offering it to me? The Head of the Ichinose House is--”

“Your father, is that right? However, your Father is part of the docile faction.”

At that, Guren smiles once again.

“Then, I'm meant to be an extremest?”

Saitou nods apologetically.

“While this happened a while ago and I apologize for it, we have also done some investigations into the past. Including yours. And your father's. Considering this conversation in going forward, we made a choice.”

“You chose me?”

“Yes.”

“You thought that I would readily accept, did you?”

Saitou shakes his head.

“No. We did not think that. However, we thought that before it starts we should speak out to you.”

Or so he says.

Before it all starts, huh.

In other words,

“Even if you did not have the Ichinose House, you intend to go to war?”

At that Saitou shrugs his shoulders.

“The ones who started it were the Hiiragi though.”

“To make matters worse, by giving me this much information, it won't be some distant future where you'll garishly start a dispute, huh.”

Smiling widely, Saitou nods.

“We'll postpone it by 10 days. After 10 days, Hyakuya Church will go to war with Hiragi House.”

“10 days, huh. So I will have until then to reply...”

“No, we need your reply now. If you do not join us today, then the plan for you to also be our enemy will be put into progress.” Saitou says, staring right at Guren.

Guren glares right back in return.

“That's not happening. In the first place, if I don't know the authenticity of what you say, I cannot accept. Is the Hiiragi House really going wild with forbidden magic? Is it really necessary to stop them? Far from that, if you Hyakuya Church guys want to wrestle with Hiiragi House, it's possible you're test-driving with the Ichinose House to erase us. With that state of affairs, you expect me to give a response right away? That's asking too much.” He responds.

However Saitou simply bows his head at that.

“I see. Then negotiations have broken down.”

“No.”

“What is it? Or is it that you going to fight us? Please be decisive. In all honestly, we're fine either way. With whether you became our comrade, or not...”

In other words, it is what it is. If a war began, lots of comrades would be preferable. Even so, these guys thought the Ichinose House would not influence a great amount of people with or without the degree of power they brought with them.

It was just fact.

None the less, the Hyakuya Church, with the Ichinose House continuing their many years of submission, is a bigger organization than even the Hiiragi House. Though he went as far to bow his head here, one could not say that the power of the Ichinose was necessary.

Until the end, before it began, they just spoke out. If they did not reply immediately, the Ichinose House will be destroyed.

That's why inside Guren's head he was wondering how to best act. What was the best method to ensure a future where Ichinose House wouldn't be destroyed. A method to ensure a future where those that belonged to the “Emperor's Moon” would not be destroyed.

Right now, with one answer he had to give, there was a possibility that nothing would change.

In that case, what was the best thing to do?

What is the best way for him to move?

As Guren is forming those thoughts in his head, he replies.

“At least, give me an hour.”

“I cannot.” Saitou declines.

At that, Guren narrows his eyes.

“Then my answer is 'No'. If I am unable have a frank conversation with you, I won't be able to form an alliance. I won't be trampled over by you guys.”

“Is that so... that is deplorable.”

“No, what is deplorable will happen much later. You will feel pain and regret over not giving me time and properly getting along with me.”

“Haha, that's a funny joke, isn't it.” Saitou smiles.

At that point, the supermarket's automatic doors open.

“Saitou-san! Hey, help me! As I suspected, buying this many sweets-- it's heavy!”

And out came the young blonde boy named Mikaela.

Guren looks over in his direction.

Mikaela became aware he was being watched.

“Hey hey, Saitou-san. Who is that mister with the bad look in his eyes?” He asks.

At that Saitou smiles at Mikaela, however, he replies whilst not looking at Guren.

“Who knows? I'm unaware. I thought maybe he was an acquaintance of Mikaela-kun.”

“I don't know him.”

“Is that so? Then I suppose he's a pervert.”

“Uwa, scary.”

So went the ridiculous exchange Saitou had with the boy.

With that, negotiations had met their conclusion.

Saitou said he did not know Guren.

In other words, they were no longer comrades.

With that, Saitou and the boy turn their backs on him and walk away. Probably to return to the orphanage.

In silence, Guren watches them until they disappeared into the distance.

“Now then, we'll see whether or not my judgement was accurate.”

He thinks that it's important for him to double-check later. There must have been some underlying message behind Saitou's words for him to think it necessary to reach out to the Ichinose house even a little.

In ten days time, a war between the Hyakuya Church and the Hiiragi Household will begin-- whatever he meant by that, Guren did not know. Yet, if that was true, how the Ichinose House would position itself, where it would position itself, and to what extent it would participate in this war, it was necessary to determine that as soon as possible--
“No, or is it that making a move is the very thing the Hyakuya Church is aiming for? They'll make the relationship between the Ichinose and Hiiragi bad, and in the meantime reap the benefits, or something.”

In any case, it was imperative that he move cautiously.

With that said,

“Guren-sama! Sorry for making you wait~!”

Shigure and Sayuri both exited the supermarket with hands full with shopping bags. Guren unfolds his arms and gets his ass off the guardrail. Then, he turns his eyes to the bags his attendents are holding.

“What exactly are you planning, buying that much?”

“Wellll, today had a lot of bad things happen, so I thought that we should have a party with barbeque curry and yakisoba.” Sayuri replies happily.

“How much do you plan to eat?”

“It is all food Sayuri likes, isn't it. Of course, I have thought to make food Guren-sama would want to eat. Right, Sayuri?” Shigure says from next to Sayuri.

“Yes! Guren-sama, what would you like?”

“Whatever's fine.”

“--you always say that, it's so troubling~. Anyway, since tomorrow the Academic Acceleration Examinations are starting, you need to eat properly and built up your strength.”

She says that, but after having that conversation about the Hyakuya Church, Guren couldn't care less about the Academic Acceleration Examinations. Because in ten days time, a war might begin between the comrades of a large magical organization.

With an excited face, Sayuri forcefully presses Guren, “Come, come come, what would you like?”

Since it seemed like it would just go on longer if he didn't answer, Guren reluctantly replies.

“Then, I'll go with curry.”

“Indian curry? European curry?”
“The way a Soba shop does it.”

“Leave it to me! Alright, today I will make delicious curry! Ah, if it's like how a Soba shop does it, we have to buy spring onion! Wait a moment, Yuki-chan, I'll be back!”

Sayuri turns on her heel and heads back into the supermaket.

Shigure watches her do so, then turns her eyes up to me. As expected, they're cold.

“Guren-sama.”

“Mm?”

“I will say this incidentally, but you do remember that yesterday was also curry?”

“Eh? Aah, was it?”

“By some chance, is there something bothering you?” She asks, then immediately continues, “If you are concerned about the incident that happened at school today, if I am good enough, please consult me...”

Guren shakes his head.

“Aah, no. It's not like that. Besides, in the next several days I'll need advice from you both, so don't mind it.”

“The next several days? You mean...”

“But before then, I need to call home. So, the wiretap in my cellphone...”

Immediately understanding that the circumstances right now must be stressful, Shigure's face turns deferential.

“Certainly, the mechanism to block the wiretap has been repeatedly installed, but...”

“But currently we're in Hiiragi territory, right?”

“Yes.”

“So you can't say it's definitely blocked.”

“As you say.”

“Alright. When we get home, I'll write a letter. Send word forward to the delivery person.”

“Understood. Shall I move forward immediately?”

“Do that.”

Shigure nods her head. She begins to run, but becomes aware of the bags she is holding.

“Ah...”

“I'll take them.” Guren says, snatching the bags.

“Thank yo...”

“Hurry and go.”

“Yes.”

At that, Shigure runs off.

Coincidentally, Sayuri exits the supermarket at that moment. She looks around them restlessly.

“Huh, where's Yuki-chan?”

“On a separate errand.”

“Ah, ah, that it's necessary for Guren-sama to carry those bags... please pass them over to me.”

“It's fine. Let's go home.”

“But,”

“I said it's fine.” Guren says, and begins walking towards home.

Walking behind Guren, Sayuri speaks up, “U-um, Guren-sama.”

“Mn?”

“Um, walking together like this with Guren-sama, that is, I wonder how we may be seen by outside...”

Guren cuts her off.

“Keep your wild ideas to yourself.”

“Weh... yessssir.”

- - -

That night, Guren writes home to his family. He writes about the contact made with the Hyakuya Church. About how the Hiiragi Household will run wild, and how it is possible they will cause the destruction of the world with a virus. About how a war between the Hyakuya Church and the Hiiragi House will begin in ten days time.

And then, about the proposal Guren was given by the Hyakuya Church, and his own judgement.

The intention is for the letter to reach home that very day. When it concerns an issue this big, the Ichinose House will gather the staff that are familiar with “The Emperor's Moon” and then deal with how to resolve it.

It is intended to be the beginning of authenticating Saitou's speech via gathering information.

It would likely take around three days time to do so. After that they would have a week to make preparations.

However, if the ten days given was Saitou lying, soon they would have no time at all to take things leisurely. There is a chance a war would start.

Additionally, if one is careless, it would be a war that quite possibly ruins Japan--

During that time, how would he and the others conduct themselves?

“No, in that confusing off chance, I need to think about how I would become number one.”

That night, it was all Guren kept thinking about on his own.

Chapter 6: Academic Acceleration Examination

The Academic Acceleration Examination begins at 6 in the morning.

It takes place on the school grounds – or so they're called, but it is more like a large manoeuvring ground where even military exercises could take place.

Every student in school has congregated there.

As the Academic Acceleration Examination involves students from each year in the school, in order to ensure all students could try to win their fights against one

another, it takes place over one weeks time.

Incidentally, my classmates have had some rivalry amongst each other from the beginning in order to avoid repeatedly failing to advance and getting beat up.

Of course, all that's left now is to finally assess their individual abilities against each other, but,

“All of you, it is absolutely prohibited for you to lose to anyone outside of your own class, got it!”

Or so the lady teacher, Aiuchi Saia, has been getting worked up about since this morning.

“Our class is the most elite, so for a week from today, the plan is to prove it!” And so on she went.

“...”

At that, one could see that Guren was set a little bit apart from his classmates.

Since the incident yesterday in the corridor, Shinya, Goshi and Mito all stayed away from him, leaving Guren perfectly isolated.

Of course, for him that was an easy enough thing to accomplish.

“...”

With a look of boredom, he surveys the other students.

The first match had begun already.

It was a match involving a girl from his class whose name he's forgotten, and a boy from Class 2.

They are struggling against each other's power, so the match had yet to end.

Relatedly, the match involved the use of perfected formal combat.

The rules that set the conditions of victory were:

- The referee declares who has won overall.
- The referee declares who has the higher ability.
- In a situation where you kill your opponent, you would be contrarily marked down.

But that was all there was to it.

Due to these rules, you were allowed to use any weapon or any magic you wished.

Additionally, even if you killed your opponent, you wouldn't be expelled from school. You wouldn't even be questioned for your crime, and the police also wouldn't be contacted.

That's just the kind of place this was. It is utter foreign ground.

The so-called Gods named the Hiiragi controlled everything, so within Japan this place was like some kind of classified country of its own.

Of course, to make sure there wouldn't be any casualties, the examinations have a referee, which five teachers were given the role of.

Speaking of that,

“The winner is Year 1 Class 9's Sugiyama Midori.” The referee calls out the name of the girl who is in the same class as Guren.

Looking at her, the classmate named Suigiyama Midori had thrown the boy from the Class 2 to the ground, and was holding a knife to his neck.

“Alriiiiightttttt!” Their homeroom teacher, Aiuchi Saia, pumps her fists in the air at that. The students also get excited.

“The next student after Sugiyama-san, please proceed!” Says the referee, and the next student steps forward.

As it is, today all the students from Class 2 and Class 9 were facing one another.

Speaking of Class 2 – Guren turns his eyes to the other side of the stadium, where the crowd of students from Class 2 are located.

One of Guren's attendants, Yukimi Shigure, is in Class 2.

However, Guren cannot see Shigure in the group of students opposite of them.

He shrugs at that.

“Well, she is tiny after all...”

“Who is tiny?” Shigure asks from his side.

Guren looks down in the voice's direction. Shigure is standing there with cold eyes, and looks up to meets his gaze horizontally.

“What are you doing over here?”

“I thought I should come and give Guren-sama my salutations.”

“What salutations?”

“My class and your class have come to blows, Guren-sama.”

“I can tell that just by looking.”

“Yes. You are right. However, I did not think that Guren-sama knew which class I was in... I am surprised that you were also looking out for me.” She says, speaking of such a trivial thing.

In that time, the second round had already started.

As expected, a classmate of his, whose name he also does not know, fights frantically. Their movements are slow. The rate at which they invoke their spells and how they treat their weapon is also cruddy.

“I wonder if that person is really an Elite.” Shigure says at that, and Guren quirks a smile.

“There's quite some room to breathe isn't there, Shigure.”

“The level of this opponent...”

“Not your 'enemy'?”

“Yes.”

“Well, that's promising. In that case, who's your opponent?” He asks, but a voice from his side interrupts them.

“What are you two so secretly discussing?” A girl with red hair glares at them with sharp eyes. It was Jujo Mito.

Guren turns to Mito and replies, “Does it look like we're talking secretly?”

At that, Mito points at Shigure, “It does. If only because my opponent is your attendant.”

Guren stares at Mito, then looks down to Shigure.

“Is that right?” He asks.

Shigure nods lightly, “Yes.”

“I see. Then you're checking out the competition.”

“Is it alright for me to win?” She asks, but Mito interrupts –

“As if you would win? What does an attendant with such a foolish master think she can do against me, someone from the Jujo house, as an opponent?”

Shigure glares at Mito.

“You... if you make a mockery of my Master any more than you have been...”

“Aha, and if I do, what would you do?”

“I would kill you.” Shigure says with a truly frosty tone. Her voice had such cold pressure that, if used against a normal person, they would freeze in place and shiver from the ruthlessness.

However, Mito doesn't shrink away. Instead she waves it off.

“In that case, let's look forward to it. Well then, be seeing you.” Mito turns her back to them and leaves.

Guren watches her go, then speaks up.

“Hey, Shigure.”

“Yes.”

“Do you think you can win against her?”

“Of course!” In a rare display of emotion, Shigure bends her petite body with all her might. She brims with determination.

This girl's abilities do not rely greatly on magic, but involve a martial art where she hides objects on her body, which manifest in her throwing knives. It seems she doesn't intend to show the enemy any Ichinose-style magic.

Which is likely why she can fight seriously now. But, even taking that into account,

“Uh, that Mito from the Jujo Household still seems strong within her own right, you know.”

“Who do you support?”

“Hm? Well, I could go either way.”

“You will not cheer for me?”

Guren smiles at that.

“If I don't cheer for you, would you lose?”

Shigure looks disgruntled and replies, “Not at all. It is just a little lonesome.”

“Haha. Well, let's forget about this trivial talk. Instead let's focus on how you should take care...”

Before he can finish, Shigure nods.

“Of course. I will not use Ichinose-style magic. There is no need to reveal our

hand to the enemy, after all. Even if I used it, I would use magic that is shared with the Hiiragi."

"Mm. If you understand that, it's fine. Then, go as crazy as you like. Let loose all your resentment here." Guren says, and soon after the referee calls Shigure's name.

"Year 1 Class 2, Yukimi Shigure. Come forward."

Shigure steps forward. Halfway there, she stops and looks back.

"It's fine for you to cheer for me, you know?"

"I know already. Now get going."

"Yes."

Shigure continues forward, and her opponent's name is called out.

"Year 1 Class 9, Jujo Mito. Come forward."

Mito steps out. As person who boasted about herself being a Jujo, she softly sweeps back her red hair.

Shigure speaks to her coldly.

"You're a tyrant."

Mito smiles in a confident and actually rather beautiful way at that.

"I don't listen to what Class 2 has to say."

"I will kill you."

"For you, that's impossible."

Before Mito finishes talking, Shigure ducks her hand behind her back. Guren knows that she's reaching for the knives up her sleeves.

Mito also seems to mutter something quietly. It is likely a Hiiragi-style spell. The Jujo household – through curses, they could break the limits of physical ability. Shinya had shown Guren as much before, and the magic seemed to give the user a boost akin to divine possession. Already, a triangular ring of fire even redder than the red hair it floated above was forming.

"My... could that be the curse of the Wisdom King, Vajrayaksa?" Guren murmurs to himself with great interest.

At that moment, the referee steps forward.

They talk to the two participants of the match about important points of note.

Such as what will signal the end of the match, and how if you killed your opponent your grade will be marked down.

In the middle of the students, Guren overhears Goshi Norito, who was smiling flippantly, murmur to himself, “Hoh hooh, terrific. As expected, Mito's match has got to be seen.”

To which Shinya replies, “...I wonder if we will get to see Ichinose-style magic.”

As expected, others were also observing them with those kind of eyes. However, the circumstances did not allow for them to get their hopes up. It was a situation where Guren held little sympathy, and it is likely Shinya had already lost his interest in the Ichinose.

It's then the referee cries out, “Start!”

In an instant, both Shigure and Mito move. As Mito is boosted by magic, her movements are extraordinarily fast. However, Shigure reacts to it efficiently and moves behind her. She swings her hand. Doing so, an infinite number of daggers (which one could call “kunai”) fly out from her sleeve – and around the hilts of those kunai are tied threads, which flutter through the air.

Depending on how those threads are touched, it is made up in such a way that the magic talismans attacked to them would explode, and cause the kunai to jump back up into the air.

Nonetheless, Mito turns her nose up at it.

“I see, you're a practitioner of hidden weapons... an ability befitting the underhanded Ichinose household.”

She doesn't stop her charge. In an instant she chooses to disregard the snares encircling her and continues rushing forward. Mito's thin legs stretch out from her skirt and touch the string. Immediately, the magic talismans explode.

The kunai spring up and aim themselves at the very person who touched the thread.

However, Mito easily avoids them. Not only that, but she avoids all the successive kunai aimed at her as well. What she couldn't avoid, she knocked aside by hand, and kept going forward.

Seeing that, Goshi speaks up, “Woah, the Jujo household sure is amazing after all.”

Still, the situation does not excite Shinya all the same. It seems that Mito's movements, and the degree Shigure used magic to ensnare others, would not elicit a response from a person of the Hiiragi.

The distance between Shigure and Mito is quickly closed.

“Alright, this is the end,” Mito smiles, raising her fist.

Even so, Shigure also smiles.

“Too bad. That pride of yours will be what kills you.”

There's a sound of her snapping her right hand's fingers. Then, the very kunai that Mito had avoided and tossed aside explode, before springing back up from the ground. Abruptly, the fist Mito was throwing gets constrained by the thread of the kunai that she had left behind her. And with that...

“Ugh.” Mito's movement has been stopped.

It's only natural. The thread that Shigure uses has been bewitched, after all. For those who touch it, their movements grow weaker as if they have been injected with anaesthetic.

Shigure takes out one kunai from underneath her skirt. Without hesitation, she gestures it at Mito's neck to take her out in one sure strike.

At that point, Guren moves to stop Shigure with an order.

The referee also shouts at her to “stop!”

“Mooooooveeee!” Mito screams. The flames atop her red hair suddenly glow even redder and swirl around in a circle. And just like that, the girl ignores how the threads restrict her and sends her fist flying.

“What?!” Shigure's face goes slack. Mito's fist collides directly with her cheek.

“Gah!”

As she groans, her kunai go flying. The kunai scratches Mito's face, but don't fully hit their mark.

Shigure's body is sent flying an unbelievable distance and crashes to the ground. She rolls, and no longer moves. It was befitting of the amount of damage she had received. She's likely gotten a concussion, and for now won't be able to rise.

However, Mito keeps going, running towards Shigure.

“Wait! The winner is Jujo Mito!” The referee cries out.

With that, the winner is decided. Guren crosses his arms as he watches it all play out.

“Hmph.”

What is more, the homeroom teacher Aiuchi Saia pumps her fists in the air.

“Alright! As expected from Mito of the Jujo Household!”

Nonetheless, Mito, who had stopped, watches the collapsed Shigure intently. For some reason, she was staring at her with frustration.

The referee speaks to her, “What is it? Stand down.”

So she shakes her head, and raises her hand to appeal to the five referees.

“Um... please make this match a draw.”

“Eh?”

All the referees stare at Mito simultaneously.

At that, Mito prepares an explanation. She points at the thin scratch left on her own cheek, “In the end, I was injured here. And this girl is a hidden weapon practitioner. If this was actual combat...”

A referee interrupts her, “Do you want to say that it would have been covered in lethal poison?”

“Yes. I have undertaken training, so even if I have been poisoned I can move for a short while. But in the end I likely would have been stopped by this girl who cannot even get up.”

“So in the end you would die too.”

“That's right.”

“I see. I understand. However, we cannot go back on our decision. The winner is you.”

“But,”

“We decide the outcome. Your opinion is irrelevant. Do not complain so much. Or could it be that you feel like opposing the law the Hiiragi has set down for us?”

“...” Mito stops speaking.

“I'm sorry.” The girl then says, and steps down.

Guren watches that attentively, then walks over to where Shigure had collapsed and stayed motionless. He arrives next to her after some struggle, and lowers his eyes.

When he does, she seems to regain consciousness.

Her expression is that of extreme displeasure. She bites at her lower lip as a way to somehow endure it.

At that face, Guren speaks to her,

“Hahaaa, you lost.”

“...uh, guh, I – I'm sorry.” Her face scrunches up with dejection.

“A-at least, I felt that I had to win here... once again, I've caused shame to Guren-sa...” Shigure's words go soft, and she begins to shed tears.

Guren smiles.

“Was Jujo strong?”

“... yes. I detest myself for being so foolish.”

“Well, nonetheless she said it was a draw, you know.”

“As far as being a guardian of the Ichinose household goes, as far as being the person named Shigure... a draw holds the same meaning as losing.”

“Then, you're being a sore loser.”

“Yes...”

“Can you get up on your own?”

“Uuuh...” Looks like she can't stand just yet. The severity of Mito's fist was that significant.

With that, a voice calls out to them from behind their backs.

“Um...” The voice belonged to Mito, “Is that girl okay?” She says, apparently concerned.

On cue Shigure answers, “... please do not come any closer.”

“Well, you heard her.” Guren says, turning his head to look at Mito.

“But...”

“Right now, Shigure has asked you not to come any closer while she's miserably crying. Have some consideration for her feelings.”

“Ah...”

Mito's face turns a little chagrined at that. This girl, at heart, seemed to be a good person.

However,

“Nevertheless, I will not to speak to someone like you, who has no ability of his own.”

For some reason, the brunt of her anger was aimed Guren's way. She glares at him with confident eyes.

“Ah, is that so?”

“It is. After having fought with her, I have words to say to Yukimi Shigure-san, who I accept as strong...”

“So you're saying I'm a hindrance.”

“That's right.”

“Well, I'm fine with that. 'Kay, Shigure, I'm heading off.”

Shigure finally manages to rise off the ground at that, though she only manages it half-way.

“Ah, I... will go back with you.”

Even so, Mito rushes over to Shigure.

“Um, about just now...”

“If you intend to apologize for hitting me, please do not. It was that kind of match...”

Mito interrupts her.

“No, I am apologizing for what I had said before the match. I misunderstood what it meant to be an attendant of Ichinose Guren. You were strong.”

Shigure is left speechless. Likely, she wants to say something foolish like how her Master is actually stronger than her. The person in question turns his head to look at her over his shoulder.

Looking his way, Shigure's mouth flaps open and closed, before her face once again turns extremely displeased.

Mito remains oblivious and keeps speaking,

“Would you not prefer to become the attendant of the Jujo household? Your abilities will only decay if you follow this shallow Master of yours.”

“Wait, do not speak ill of my...”

“I also favour that tenacious loyalty of yours. By all means, come to the Jujo household...”

“Wait a moment, as I was saying...”

“Or for the time being, come to my estate at least once...”

“Um, Guren-sama!” Shigure cries out to Guren for assistance, but Guren ignores her and returns to where his classmates are.

When he gets there, Goshi has begun fighting. The student he faces from Class 2 is also male.

“Eeh~ I don't feel like doing my best against a male opponent.” Goshi says, preposterously.

Shinya laughs from the sidelines and retorts, “In that case, do you have an interest in hitting women?”
As one would expect, Goshi grins flippantly as he turns his head to reply, “No no, if my opponent was a cute girl I'd just give up and have my tactics focus on trying to kiss her as much as possible, yanno.”

Not only that, but the opponent he was facing seemed faint-hearted.

“... ahh... dammit... why, of all people, did my first match have to be against the Goshi household... there's no way I can win...”

“Well, whatever. Let's do this. I'll finish it quick. Once I get today's match over and done with, I have to go looking for some hot chicks.” Goshi states, and beckons his opponent over with a finger to provoke him.

At that, the opposing student draws a valuable sword from his belt. It seems that he was a person who came from a family of swordsmen. Suitably, his movements were smooth, and he had the atmosphere for it.

However, Goshi asks with his eyes half-closed, “Gonna come at me?”

The opposing student nods, “I will come at y...”

“Come on already.”

“Coming!”

He strikes with his sword. But the very moment he strikes, his sword disappears.

Goshi is now standing behind the owner of the sword. As he holds the very sword of his opponent, he slowly points it to that student's neck...

“Is it okay to say this is the end?” He asks.

The student that was his opponent, had not even taken one step.

“...well, he's extremely fast.” Guren mutters to himself.

Having said that, Shinya, who was across from him, replies. He takes a breath in order to even look Guren's way.

“He's not fast” He spits out.

“Eh?” Guren enquires, but Shinya was already no longer looking his way.

Nevertheless, he actually understood what Shinya wanted to say.

It is all due to the magic Goshi uses. Goshi hadn't actually moved fast at all. All he did was convey his magic smoothly. He had calmly stepped forward, casually stole the sword, and aimed it at the back of the student's neck.

But Guren deliberately did not reveal that he saw through that magic when he spoke. All in order for Shinya to read into it. All in order to make someone from the Hiiragi make light of him.

It's gone well for him, as Shinya's behaviour towards Guren has turned discriminatory. No longer will he look Guren's way.

In any case, Guren shrugs his shoulder.

At that moment, Shinya's name gets called out.

“Year 1 Class 9, Hiiragi Shinya.”

Shinya raises his head.

“Yes.” And steps forward.

At that, the students murmur amongst themselves.

“It's Hiiragi Shinya.”
“The Hiiragi household is going to fight.”

Additionally, there were also comments on his physical appearance and how he was cool.

“It's like he's an Idol.” Guren says, smiling wryly.

The boy that is to be Shinya's opponent steps forward, but he already seems to be shrinking and pathetically looks like he'll cry.

For some reason, Shinya glances Guren's way once.

That guy seems like he's absolutely trying to stir Guren up.

“...what's with that. Weren't you disappointed in me? Or is it that you want to show me the level of difference between our abilities?” Guren mutters to himself incredulously.

At that point, the match had already started.

“Shinya-sama... I will come at you.”

“Mm. Let's have a good match.”

“Yes!” The student nods happily, then takes out some magic talismans. I appears that his opponent was a charm practitioner.

He throws several charms into the air, spreads them out, and casts a large curse.

And in that time, Shinya hasn't moved. He hasn't done anything. He just watches his opponent dimly.

With those circumstances, the opposing student falters and speaks up.

“...ah, um.”

“Mm?”

“You are not going to go on the offensive?”

“Ahh, sorry. I forgot.”

“But, on my end I have completed my arts.”

“You have? Then try attacking.”

“No, but, it is a rather large craft... a normal person receiving it, would die, so...”

“Is that so. I look forward to it.”

“Um, I do not want to kill you, so I greatly apologize. If you are fine with it, um, would you considering resigning from the...”

Shinya interrupts him, “I told you it's fine to attack. It won't carry out its purpose if you don't.” He says, astonishingly.

At that, the opposing student's face goes slack. But, that was surely because the opposing student was more and more afraid of the absurdity of it all.

Here was a person who had only learned about Hiiragi-style magic. And right now, the opposing student's expanding magic held a large amount of power.

It was a spell where, normally, you would need to spend a long time developing it and pouring power into it while you were being protected by your comrades. It could cause quite a bloodbath.

However, the student had completed it in quite a short amount of time. Thus, he must be a respectable master of it. Therefore, having completed it, that boy's win was already settled.

Not only was there no human who could receive such a blow and survive, once

the spell had been completed it could no longer be undone.

That's why he was asking for a resignation.

On the other hand,

“Um, I have no intention to kill someone from the Hiiragi household, so will you allow me to be disqualified?” The student asks of the referee.

Even so, the referee turns to look at Shinya.

“What should we do?” He asks.

“Didn't I say earlier that it's fine for him to attack me?” Shinya replies.

“But,”

“Or is it that, could it be. You want to doubt my ability in front of everyone?”

“...” The referee trembles with a start.

He then says to the opposing student, “Please attack.”

The opposing student's face appears anxious, then turns into an expression of determination.

“I, I don't know if you may die or not, alright!” He says, and invokes the magic.

The charms flicker with light up in the sky, and create a large fire. It then gets thrown towards Shinya.

But Shinya does not get flustered, and raises his hand.

“Vanish.” He says.

And just like that, the flames go out.

Everyone here had heard what he said.

Nobody could say exactly what had just occurred.

Except for the referees, everyone's faces were slack and not one could say who the winner was.

But, the winner was clear.

Shinya turns on his heel and walks this way.

“T-the winner is, Hiiragi Shinya!” The referee says with an incredibly loud voice.

In an instant, everyone surrounding Guren erupts in a cheer.

Returning to the midst of that cheer, Shinya says to Guren, “Well, in any case, you don't know what I did just now, right?”

As Guren is about to respond, Shinya leaves it at that and departs.

It seems that his reply isn't necessary.

It's true that the skill just used was incredibly amazing. But, to say that Guren did not know of it wasn't true. What Shinya had just used was also magic. In comparison to Goshi's, you couldn't even say that it was faster. It was simply that he was good at employing it differently.

It was a magic where, as he conversed and conversed and conversed, he placed magic within the opposing student's developing spell, which would intervene with the magic at fixed points. All to make sure the spell would fail.

The way Shinya fought was completely dirty. Additionally, he still had a considerable amount of room left to move. If it came to a serious fight, would Guren truly be able to kill him? He doesn't know.

But, for the time being,

“... how did you do it?” Guren tries saying. But Shinya already won't turn his head to look back at Guren.

It seems he was also uninterested in watching the next match, which was Guren's.

“Next, Ichinose Guren. Come forward.”

The referee calls his name. Shinya has already left, returning back to the classroom. Guren smiles thinly at that.

“Ichinose Guren! Hurry up and come forward!”

As he was called for, he turns forward.

“Ah, sorry.” He says, walking into the centre field.

From his back, Shigure calls out, “Guren-sama! Please do your best!”

Even though she shouts that, the other students all laugh.

Even the homeroom teacher Aiuchi Saia bursts out laughing.

“Well, it's fine for us to lose this one battle.” She says.

The student's of the opposing class are a lot more cruel. Saying things like, if you lose to that trash, that rat, you will be shamed forever.

“...”

But, this time Guren had no intention of losing. If only because he wanted to face Hiiragi Seishirou in the second round. Of course, he plans to lose at that point, but if he tried fighting against him in person he might gain a better understanding of the kind of power that those Hiiragi held.

That's why this time, he will win.

Nonetheless, he plans for it to be a close call.

The boy to be his adversary makes his exit. In his hands he holds a lance. At that, Guren draws the sword from his waist.

“Please treat me well.” He says, bowing his head.

His opponent laughs at him scornfully.

“Rats shouldn't talk to me. I'll kill you.”

“I apologize.”

“It's fine, let's do this. I'll smash you up.”

“Please be gentle...”

The match starts.

But, there is not really anything to say about this match. Guren fights with abysmal form. The other side fights defensively, and in the end frantically runs around the stadium in fear for their life. Unexpectedly, his opponent passes out from one hit.

“The winner is Ichinose Guren.”

The instant his name is called out, there is a large amount of criticism from the stadium.

Even his classmates talked badly about him, how he was the shame of the class.

“You really are weak, huh.” Goshi says with a stunned face.

Wha is more, Mito asks, “With only that much power, aren't you embarrassed to have Shigure-san as your subordinate? As someone who burdens his attendants, do you not think you should make a greater effort?”

It seems as if she was getting angry for me.

For her, apparently she had begun feeling that Shigure was to be an object of pity, as she was such a first-rate attendant.

"... yeah. Well, I always feel like I should apologize to Shigure..." Guren starts.

"In that case, you should release her as soon as possible. You do not have the qualifications to be followed by a girl such as herself."

"..."

So she says, but Shigure forces her way through.

"Please stop that. If you say any more, I will not forgive you for insulting my Master."

The other students laugh. They say he's an idiot, to be protected by a girl. They say that the head of the Ichinose House is always going to be a coward.

Hence, Mito glares in my direction.

"Are you really not ashamed of yourself?"

"Of course I'm ashamed. Every day I feel ashamed at my lack of power." Guren replies. It is the truth. He always thinks that way, about how, right now, he has no power. To have no power to take down whoever and whatever, was always a shame to him.

"In that case, why do you not make more of an effort?" Mito asks so easily.

– why, does he make no effort?

"...I wonder." Guren replies uselessly, turning his head.

Doing so, he hears a loud cheer from the match occurring adjacent to them.

It was exactly the same kind of cheer made when Shinya made his appearance.

It seems that Class 3 and Class 5's fights were taking place over there.

And in Class 3, was Mahiru.

Guren looks towards in that direction. When he does, as expected, Mahiru is entering the match.

Her movements are fast. Likely even faster than Shinya's. Not only that, but they are graced with splendour.

It looks like her opponent has the same level of power as Mito, but Mahiru is cautious and overwhelms her enemy.

In the last ten years where they haven't met, she had developed into a power befitting of her.

Was that due to her own efforts, or due to the talent which ran through the

Hiiragi bloodline?

It was probably the talent.

Guren stares at Mahiru.

"...effort, huh." He murmurs to himself again.

At that moment, Guren hears a shriek coming from a different direction. Not only that, but the shriek belonged to the voice of a girl he knows quite well.

"Sayuri...?"

He turns to look. The voice came from where Class 1 and Class 4 were fighting in their ring. As expected, even from there came a cheer. The same kind of cheer reserved for Mahiru, and Shinya, when they appeared.

At that same moment,

"Kill her! Kill her!" Was chanted.

"Please kill her, Seishirou-sama!"

"Please kill that dirty Ichinose bitch!"

Guren looks closer. When he does, he sees Sayuri and Seishirou are fighting. However, Sayuri already seemed to be falling apart. She had been hit, and blood streamed from a cut on her lips. She gasped for breath, shoulders shaking. Furthermore, the front of her sailor uniform had been torn off, and she tries to cover herself with her left hand.

"What, you want more? Do you really intend to fight me one-handed as you cover your boobs?" Seishirou says opposite her, smirking meanwhile.

The other students laugh at that.

"In that case, please strip her bare!"

"It's pretty brazen for cattle to wear clothes, after all!"

And so on, they shouted.

Seishirou holds his arms wide open as he takes their requests.

"You hear 'em. Now, in response to everyone's requests... let's take your clothes off, hmm~" He says, and takes a step forward.

Sayuri responds by ducking, but Seishirou is overwhelming fast. Seishirou's hand reaches for Sayuri's breasts.

"Ugh," Sayuri says, trying to slap the hand away. But her hand misses Seishirou's,

as he changed his fist's trajectory towards her face instead, and strikes her.

“Gah!”

Sayuri's head jerks. Through the gap in her clothes, you could see her undergarments.

But Seishirou doesn't stop his attacks.

“Cattle shouldn't show off such filthy things.” He says, then striking Sayuri in the belly.

“Ugh!”

Her body bends in a shape like the letter C. He head goes down, before being kicked up like a ball.

It's likely that at this point, Sayuri has already lost consciousness. The difference between Sayuri's and Seishirou's power was simply too big. He was an opponent Sayuri could do nothing against.

Which is why at that point, the referee should have called it to an end, but...

“Hey!”

Seishirou keeps kicking Sayuri's body. He's trying to make the collapsed Sayuri get up. Even though she had lost consciousness, Seishirou grins while kicking her body.

“Shit!” Guren groans, rushing forward.

He runs straight for the fighting ring.

“Referee! Why aren't you stopping this!” He shouts.

But even though the referees were meant to be their teachers, when they see Guren, they sneer.

The teachers were also Seishirou's comrades.

Seishirou also looks his way.

He laughs.

And while he clamps his hand around Sayuri's neck and squeezes, he says, “Ooh, you've finally come. Hey, what'll you do? Your attendant is going to die.”

“...keh.”

“Haha, what is with those eyes? Even though you're weak, you're going to rebel against me? Go ahead? Do it. There's no need to wait for our match tomorrow. Let's decide, here and now – out of the Hiiragi and the Ichinose, who is stronger?” He declares.

At that, Guren squeezes his eyes closed.

“... aah, shit. So it's come to this.” He says, and moves to step forward.

But at that moment –

“...wait.”

His arm is caught.

“With your power, you won't win against Seishirou. If you go, you'll be murdered.”

Guren turns his head.

When he does, he sees Mahiru. Mahiru, who had been fighting her own match just a while ago, was able to get behind Guren and grab his arm.

He looks her in the eye.

When he does, she gives him a small smile, and then turns her gaze to Seishirou.

“Don't tell me you intend to murder someone here?” She says.

“... so it's you, Mahiru. So what? Do you feel like raising a complaint against how I do things?” Seishirou says, looking down on Mahiru with cold eyes.

“Of course I do. What you will do affects the dignity of the Hiiragi...”

“You think I care about something like that?”

Mahiru leaps at that. As expected, her movements are not only lovely but also impeccable.

Her left fist is aimed for Seishirou. Seishirou tries to deflect her arm, but Mahiru uses it to instead snatch Sayuri away from Seishirou before he realizes it.

“Tch.” Seishirou clicks his tongue, and tries to hit Mahiru.

But Mahiru raises her head and stares at Seishirou.

"– do you really want to take this any further?" She asks.

And in that moment, that very moment, one knew that within that girl there radiated an urge to kill. The question was, to what extent did people realize it?

It was such a hard thing to realize, because it only lasted a moment.

Even so, it seemed Seishirou realized it. He stopped his hand.

Then, glaring at Mahiru with a sharp glance, "... bitch, Just because you're Father's favourite, you act so concei..."

"I am not. I never said that I want to be Father's favourite."

"Why, you..."

"And now I have no desire to exchange any more words with you. Seishirou. This match is already over with, isn't it?"

At that, the referee turns to Mahiru, "U-um... I am deeply so..."

"It's fine, so please end this unsightly match already."

"Y-yes..."

It was then the referee declared Seishirou as the winner.

With her arms full with the unconscious Sayuri, Mahiru returns to Guren.

She then speaks while holding Sayuri out to me,

"Here, your attendant."

Guren takes Sayuri in his arms.

"... um, I'm sorr..." He begins, but Mahiru interrupts him.

"I hate getting apologies from you. Especially, from the you who is always weak and cannot protect a girl..." Having said that, Mahiru leaves.

The you who is always weak.

The words echoed time and again through Guren's mind.

But, he doesn't entirely understand what she meant with those words.

Was she talking about how he couldn't protect Sayuri, or was it – how he couldn't take Mahiru back?

"..."

He gazes at Mahiru's retreating figure.

As he does, a voice reaches him from his arms.

“...h...huh? What am I...”

Sayuri has opened her eyes. Her whole face was covered in bruises.

Even though she was a girl, she had been injured like that.

That said, Sayuri looks up at Guren with a happy smile.

“A-aah, I see... Guren-sama, you came, and saved me, didn't you?”

“...”

“U-um, I'm sorry, that I didn't win.”

“...”

“B-but you know, um, I made sure to do my best, without using any of the Ichinose magic.”

“...”

“Though, um, I lost in such an unsightly way...”

At that, Guren interrupts her.

“Don't speak any more. You'll make your injuries worse. In any case, you weren't unsightly. You did well considering you were in the middle of such a shitty environment.”

“B-but...”
“I said, don't talk.”

Sayuri goes silent.

Shigure approaches from behind.

“Guren-sama. About Sayuri, I will...”

“No, I'll carry her. We're going home. Our matches for today are over.”

“Yes.”

“Also, you guys did well today.” Says Guren.

That is all he can say. He resents himself for his weakness.

And it's then that from behind his back that Seishirou speaks up. As expected,

with his face showing that he's making a fool of us, he says: “Losers.”

Simultaneously, there's a loud roar of laughter. Everyone was laughing.

At that, Sayuri and Shigure both look pained.

Guren didn't care if it was directed at him, but it was painful to watch the two injured girls.

Which is why...

“...”

Which is why, that idiot – that conceited Hiiragi trash, is going to die, Guren thinks.

If he kills him, how good would he feel? If he thought of nothing else, and surrendered to his anger and gave up all his ambitions, how good would it feel?

He thinks about that – and then, Guren turns his head to respond.

“... please, don't bully us so much.” He says, with a timid voice.

It causes another roar of laughter.

The students of the Hiiragi were laughing so hard that they couldn't help it.

In his arms, Sayuri clung to him.

Guren then scowls.

In his head, Mahiru's words repeated themselves.

““I hate getting apologies from you. Especially, from the you who is always weak and cannot protect a girl...””

“...she's completely right.”

Being fed up with everything, Guren leaves the school yard and academy behind him.

Chapter 7 – The Dream Mahiru Saw

The following day.

At the practice ground, the sorcery selection examination was still in full swing.

The practice ground was filled with students on all four sides cheering.

Guren stood among those from the elite in Year 1 Class 9. Most of the students had already beaten their opponents from other classes and were successfully promoted.

Either tomorrow or the day after, the students would be expected to compete against other from the same class.

But before that, everyone was still comrades.

From yesterday and today over these last two days of exams, the students' bonds appeared to deepen.

"…… But, I must be an exception."

A small smile appeared on Guren's face as he looked up into the sky.

Recently, the weather had been clear. Today was also the same with beautiful blue skies.

Not a cloud in the sky.

Ironically, under this beautiful sky, the students were fighting to the death against each other.

Although not as brutal to the extent of human experimentation, apparently, there would be one death every two or three years.

To be honest, this is just as bad as human experimentation.

"How is this any different to «Hyakuya Church»……?"

But, the Ichinose House also has a similar training regime, so I'm not in the position to criticise it.

Then suddenly a person appeared next to Guren, calling out to him.

"Hey, Guren."

It was Shinya.

"Hm? I thought you said you never wanted to talk to me again?"

Shinya laughed and replied.

"Ah, I did say that. And what's more, I'm very disappointed with you."

"Then don't bother me."

"But, because you're so weak that I've decided to help you out."

"Ah? What do you mean?"

"Let me fight for you in today's fight, don't compete."

Guren turned to face Shinya.

"Don't compete? What are you saying?"

Shinya replied.

"I heard about yesterday's incident. Your subordinate…… what's she called……"

"Hanayori Sayuri."

"Yes, that girl. Heard that she was admitted to the hospital?"

Guren heard him then replied.

Sayuri's injuries were severe and had to be rushed to the hospital after the fight. Guren had also instructed Shigure to look after Sayuri. So the two of them were not at school.

"How are her injuries?"

Shinya looked at Guren and asked.

Guren turned his attention back onto his classmates fighting at the practice ground and replied.

"…… Nothing much. Not a big problem. My subordinate can't possibly be affected by this extent of fighting."

“Haha, so the master is really that weak.”

“…… That’s exactly it.”

“Anyway, you really don’t have any shame at all?”

Guren glared at Shinya, not saying a word.

But Shinya was unfazed and continued to speak.

“The opponent had already lost pathetically. Even if you know you will already lose, you still have to fight Seishirou to the death ——Are you sure you’re that reckless?”

Hearing this, Guren laughed bitterly.

“Ah, what do you suggest I do about my recklessness?”

“About that……”

“I know the difference in power is really that big between that guy and myself. I’m not the sort to overestimate myself.”

“Ah~……”

“Of course, my subordinates as well….. Sayuri also doesn’t believe I would do that. They won’t believe that I would do senseless things only to get hurt……”

Shinya suddenly interrupted Guren. He waved his hands, as though wanting to forget about what Guren had just said.

“Ah~ ah~, alright that’s enough. I now completely understand your excuse. You’re really just a sad lost puppy, aren’t you?”

“……”

“It appears that I’m right. I originally thought, if you wanted revenge, I would have told you Seishirou’s weak points, but forget about it. You should withdraw. If you go and fight him, you will die for sure.”

“……”

“Seishirou is that type of guy. You’ll be playing right into his hands. The teachers also won’t stop him and even if he kills you, they won’t even give him any demerit points. So……”

“So you want me to withdraw?”

“Yes.”

“To flee without fighting?”

“Yes, that’s right. This is not exactly your strong point.”

So Shinya had said it.

Guren was lost in his thoughts. What would be the best course of action? To be honest, Guren wanted to fight with Seishirou for a little while. In order to personally determine the Hiiragi House level of sorcery.

But now the situation had changed.

After seeing Sayuri in that state yesterday, Guren didn’t know whether he could control himself.

To test Seishirou out.

Guren thought that he could pretend to be trembling in fear while secretly observing the incantations for the spells, and after that, he would just lose without anyone knowing better——

Guren didn’t think he was mature enough to tolerate this sort of situation. The anger that had been carefully hidden was now bubbling up to the surface.

His self-esteem.

His desire to show off.

However, this was just a stumbling block in his journey to gain more power. For a short-term gain, he would ruin his future.

So Guren had to constantly remind himself.

Be patient. Control your desires. This is not what you really want right now.

This is not some stupid game that children play.

So Guren looked at Shinya and said.

“Alright then, I’ll withdraw.”

Shinya was stunned, a pair of cold eyes staring back at Guren.

“…… You’re really trash, aren’t you.”

“But you’re the one who suggested it……”

But Shinya ignored Guren’s words, feeling a little regretful.

“Bastard, then Mahiru, she……”

But Shinya stopped himself. He looked at Guren, then hit his fist against his shoulder.

“Alright I’ll help you.”

After he said these words, Shinya turned and walked off.

At the practice ground, just before the current match ended.

The judge read out the names of the students for the next match.

“Year 1 Class 4, Hiiragi Seishirou, come up.”

Seishirou went up to the stage.

Then the name for the opponent was called.

“Year 1 Class 9, Ichinose Guren, come up.”

But, Guren didn’t move at all. Instead, Shinya went up.

The students all around started murmuring.

Among them were Goshi and Mito who looked over to see what was happening.

Mito asked.

“What on earth is going on?”

Goshi also asked.

“Why is Shinya-sama up there?”

Guren had an embarrassed smile on his face and replied.

“…… Heh, I withdrew.”

“Eh?”

“Because I can’t possibly beat Hiiragi Seishirou-sama.”

Hearing this, Goshi widened this eyes.

“Hah? Are you for real?”

Mito also looked at Guren.

“I say this is really too much. Your subordinate got beaten to a pulp yesterday, don’t you have any feelings at all?”

“Exactly. Even if you lose, then fair enough. Your subordinate has already fought him… and you, the master, just gives up like a coward? I can’t accept this. Even if you don’t win, you have to go out there and fight.”

“Yes! And even if you lose, we will stop him…… Otherwise, your subordinates……”

“Ahhhh, shit, just shut up. Why are you all picking on me? I already said I’ve withdrawn. I’m much weaker than Sayuri, right? If this is the case, fighting would be completely pointless.”

Mito who just kept staring at Guren was speechless.

Goshi was the same, looking at Guren like he was trash.

Then finally, at the fighting ring, Seishirou understood what was happening after seeing Shinya take Guren’s place.

“Ha, haha, what’s this? Forfeit? This is so like you. Your woman got beaten up until her face was all unrecognisable, and you just cowardly flee? No wonder the Ichinose House is all trash.”

Everyone was laughing.

By now, news of Guren’s forfeit had spread to all of the students around. The laughs kept getting louder. Teasing, cursing, everyone was mocking Guren.

But Guren was still calm.

“……”

Guren didn’t move, couldn’t face anyone, so he just looked up towards the sky.

But he still could hear what everyone was saying.

“This guy is so scared that he can’t move at all?”

“Really what a piece of trash.”

“So this is the guy whose subordinate got beaten up yesterday? After forfeiting today, how can he even show his face at school?”

Similar words were being said all around.

Guren could hear laughter everywhere.

How they laughed at his own cowardice.

Even Guren started to laugh at himself.

As they say, I really am a piece of trash.

A useless piece of trash with absolutely no self-esteem or pride.

I have to wait until they get tired of laughing at me. Wait until they stop noticing me.

As always.

For the next three years, I have to continue playing this piece of trash.

——But now, the situation has changed.

“…… What?”

Suddenly, Guren felt a strong sense of unease and wanted to react. He felt that he could not stop himself. He looked towards the direction of the source of this unease.

Nothing.

Then he saw a flash of red light.

The red light was aimed at Guren’s direction. It was a direct attack and Guren was preparing to dodge it.

But then he saw a girl standing on his side.

Juujou Mito and Goshi Norito, both were standing in the direction of the red light.

But the two didn’t see the attack.

They did not even notice it.

No, in this case, ordinary people won't even notice it.

This also meant that if Guren didn't react, those two would die.

Guren scrunched his face up,

"Shit."

He stretched out his hand.

And gave Mito a hard push.

"What?"

Mito had a big shock being pushed suddenly. And bumped into Goshi who was standing next to her.

"Uwa! What was that?"

Goshi looked surprised at Guren.

Mito fell onto the floor,

"You! What the hell was that……"

But her words stopped short.

The red light had finally reached them.

The red light passed by Mito's eyes and engulfed a dozen students behind her in flames, some of them falling onto the ground.

Then, it exploded.

Fortunately, the explosion range wasn't that big. It appeared that its purpose wasn't to kill people.

Even so, it caused no small damage.

Students have died.

To make matters worse, it wasn't just one red light anymore.

There were more than ten beams of red light spread across the practice ground, students were falling all across the grounds.

There were explosions everywhere.

The ground shook.

The ears could hear a constant ringing noise.

Then, after a moment of silence,

"Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!"

"Wh… What? What the hell happened?"

"Arm, my arm!?"

"D… dead!? Everyone is dead!?"

The practice ground was filled the sound of agony.

The students were all crying and howling.

The cries of terror were getting louder and louder.

But now wasn't the time to cry.

Obviously, the school had suffered a surprise attack.

Guren once again looked up to the sky.

At this time, there was a large group of men in black suits coming down from above.

Yes.

So the war has started.

The war between «Hyakuya Church» and Hiiragi House has started.

What Saitou had said about the war starting in ten days has been a lie. Because it has only been two days.

Even though Guren didn't believe his words,

"Isn't this still too early?"

Guren observed his surroundings.

By now, there were only a few people who could react rationally to this situation.

The sudden explosion and resulting smoke had reduced visibility.

It looked like the red lights just now were used to create a distraction.

Mito and Goshi were nowhere to be seen. Guren could only see Shinya and Seishirou.

But he could still hear the screams.

The students were all heard screaming through all the smoke.

"Don't kill me! Please, I beg you! Don't kill…. Noooooooooooooo!"

"What, what the hell…… do you think you're doing! This, this school is run by『Mikado no Oni』, don't you know…… Gyaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!?"

Now the enemy was in total control.

Fully armed soldiers attacking a bunch of unsuspecting students… this was too easy.

"There might not be one left eh……"

Guren put his hand on sword around his hip.

Then, at the practice ground where the examinations were just held was a man wearing a black suit standing in the centre.

Someone familiar.

Someone Guren first met just two days ago.

It was that man named Saitou, the «Hyakuya Church» assassin.

Saitou looked around him and a smile formed on his face.

"Good, kill all of them."

He opened his arms.

This time, Shinya reacted to it.

"Who on earth is that guy……"

Then Seishirou also spotted Saitou,

"Bastard, what are you laughing at……? Attacking the Hiiragi House, don't think it's going to end well for you……"

"I also thought so too. But what I hate most is a brat who talks too much."

Saitou said.

Suddenly, several chains came out of Saitou's body and attacked Seishirou in one hit.

Seishirou dodged it.

One chain, two chains, three chains.

“Heh, hehe, you still want to fight with these weak weapons?”

Seishirou laughed.

It turned out this was just a distraction.

Saitou’s real aim was to get him to move in that direction.

Saitou’s chains were gaining speed.

Saitou smiled and said.

“Checkmate. Don’t forget to tell God in heaven that you died because of your arrogance.”

In an instant, a chain flew out.

Seishirou was unable to dodge it. His actions just now landed him in a spot where movement was impossible. No, even if he had space to move, he would still be unable to react to the speed of Saitou’s chains.

Saitou’s real power is actually this strong.

“Wait, don’t……”

There was a look of absolute fear on Seishirou’s face.

But, Guren,

“…… Move, you idiot.”

Suddenly, Guren viciously kicked him from behind.

“Guh!”

Seishirou’s body ended up flying, disappearing into the smoke where the first explosion took place.

But, Saitou’s attack didn’t stop even though Seishirou had disappeared. The chains that he had cast out before were now ready to attack again.

All the chains were moving around rapidly, just like when Seishirou wasn’t able to dodge it.

A total of eight chains, dispersing in all directions——

“……”

But Guren ignored them.

Turning a blind eye to all the chains around him.

If he had reacted to each one, he would not be able to react in time, so he only looked in front, then, in a moment just before the chains entered his field of vision, he drew his sword.

The sword already had a few curses placed upon it. A spell that unsheathed it quickly. A spell that enhanced its sharpness. And a spell to cut through anything.

Guren cast a few incantations simultaneously that were normally impossible, instantly cutting down all the chains.

Then——

He heard a voice from behind him.

Shinya’s voice.

Guren glanced behind. Spotting a stunned Shinya,

“…… You, your power……”

“…… Ah shit, the guy I least wanted to witness my power actually witnesses it……”

“You, if you were always this strong, then why did you……”

But, Guren interrupted him.

“Shut up. I’ll have to kill you. I’m not the sort to believe a guy who talks endlessly about his ambitions……”

“…… Ah.”

“But, now the situation has changed. Answer me. Do you really want to fight the Hiiragi House?”

“……”

“If you’re lying to me, I’ll immediately unleash my real power and kill you.”

Having said so, Guren turned his blade and aimed it at Shinya’s neck. Shinya didn’t react. No, to be exact, it was Guren who didn’t allow him to react as he moved his blade with such impeccable speed and timing.

“Guh.”

Shinya still looked surprised.

Guren let out a smile and said.

“But, if your hatred towards the Hiiragi House is real, then I’ll take you as my subordinate. How’s that? Become my subordinate and help me defeat that black suit?”

Shinya looked at the knife pointed at his neck and laughed happily.

“…… Ha ha…… so it has come to this. You make it sound like I’m the one who’s……”

“Weaker.”

“Ha, don’t look down……”

But his words were stopped short.

Because Saitou had launched another chain.

Guren dodged the oncoming chain. The chain was fast. Just as fast as how Seishirou couldn’t dodge it just now.

If you don’t react in time, you’ll immediately die.

Several chains moving towards Shinya shot past.

So if this guy really is useless trash, then I don’t need to waste my shots on him——

But, this time,

“So how do you intend on killing him?”

Shinya asked from behind.

Guren turned his head and saw Shinya already placing a talisman on the chain and sealing it to the ground.

It seems that I’m not the only one who has been hiding his strength.

Guren opened his mouth to reply.

“Ha, mine is stronger.”

“Heh, why don’t we compare?”

Shinya looked at Guren.

This time, Saitou interrupted them.

“Yaaaa~, why is it that the area I’m in charge of is the most troublesome. Out of the seven people I have to watch out for at this school, I have to fight two of them at the same time.”

Guren turned to face Saitou and said.

“I see. So you have checked out both Shinya and myself, Saitou.”

“Of course. We can’t possibly fight the Hiiragi House without doing our research first.”

This time, Shinya spoke.

“Oi, Guren. Do you know this guy……”

Before Shinya finished, Guren replied.

“They are from the «Hyakuya Church». To stop the war started by the Hiiragi House, they have asked for my help.”

Faced with this reply, Shinya looked at Saitou through his half-lidded eyes, not in the slightest way surprised.

“Aaaah~ so I see this is the situation….. I don’t have to think too hard about what you’ve said to understand. But to brazenly challenge someone from the Hiiragi House…..”

Guren continued.

“It can only be the «Hyakuya Church». But if you ask this sort of question, you’re just as stupid as a monkey.”

“Aha, do you want me to kill you?”

“As if you can.”

“Hahaha.”

Shinya continued to laugh.

“Then, what exactly is the situation now?”

He asked.

Shinya looked around his surroundings,

“It seems that we’re surrounded by this smoke. In order for the other students and teachers not to see us……”

Guren only needed to use his eyes to assess the situation.

He could still hear the howling from outside, as well as the sounds of explosion and fighting.

Shinya continued to speak.

“And it seems to be planned from the start. To surround us two Hiiragi House haters in smoke where no one else can see. It looks like……”

Saitou replied smiling.

“Iyaaaa~ it’s so great to be talking to people who are smart. Of course, this was planned.”

“Hmph. And?”

“…… Why don’t we team up to fight the Hiiragi House? Then after the Hiiragi House has been defeated, you’ll be able to take charge of it.”

Hearing this, Shinya became interested and laughed.

“Hoho, so between Guren and myself, who will become the head?”

And then Saitou,

“That’s a matter between the two of you. You can fight to decide that.”

So he said.

Shinya looked at Guren.

“So he has said it. What are you going to do about it?”

“……”

“So it seems you’ve already accepted their proposal. What conditions did they set for you? Are you already part of the «Hyakuya Church»?”

He asked.

Guren glanced at Shinya and replied.

“I’ve already told you that you’re a troublesome guy. You should just accept it already. After defeating the Hiiragi House, I don’t care who becomes the head.”

“Eh? Then.”

Guren interrupted him and continued.

“But, I’m definitely not under «Hyakuya Church». Being dependent on people, pretending to be weak, I’ve already had enough, so……”

Guren jumped up and raised his sword.

“I want to get rid of all the people above me and destroy them all!”

Guren swung his sword at Saitou.

Not wanting to just kill him, but to banish his existence from earth.

Saitou looked up.

“Really, haven’t you already tried this? Physical attacks are useless against me. This is the result of the experimentation.”

Saitou said, then another chain shot out from his body as it atomised.

That’s right.

Looks like this guy doesn’t have a physical body.

Maybe this human form is only temporary and the chains that shoot out——that is his actual body.

But, Guren didn’t care and he swung his sword at Saitou.

Saitou used his chains to block Guren’s attack.

“Ahh, so it seems that if it’s only the chains, then they can be stopped……”

Then the sounds of chains breaking could be heard.

And Guren had cut through Saitou’s shoulder.

But Saitou continued to laugh and gloated.

“See, I told you it’s useless……”

But Guren didn’t stop there. Hidden in his sleeve, he took out a talisman and placed it on his sword.

In an instant, his blade was shrouded in blood-like crimson flame.

“Destroy, Kujakumaru*!”

Suddenly, an explosion.

The talisman that was placed on the blade had exploded on Saitou’s body.

Previously, Saitou’s body turned into mist in order to absorb the impact of a physical attack. But this time, he was unable to do it.

Guren’s Kujakumaru was an heirloom that had been passed down the generations in the Ichinose House. It was a sword that had been sealed with the curses of those who had been beheaded by it.

Once the seal had been lifted,

“Gah, ah, what…… My body……. Is not responding……”

Saitou’s face was filled with shock as he looked on at Guren.

And murmured.

“My, my body was made to dispel any curse from Hiiragi House.”

Guren looked at Saitou,

“But I’m not a Hiiragi.”

And replied.

The curse was gradually corroding Saitou’s body. His flesh was tearing, his body starting to atomise, while his chains were turning into red lumps.

Guren had a cruel smile on his face and said.

“Ne, Saitou. Do you know why your body is turning red? You’ve become cursed by this blade. And being cursed, you’ve become its food. After being swallowed, you will tumble around inside the blade for all of eternity.”

Saitou looked up, full of fear.

“St, stop……”

“If you want me to stop, then you have to answer my question truthfully. Why attack here? Why attack a school full of powerless kids? The Head of the Hiiragi House is not here. So why on earth are you bunch of bastards attacking this place?”

Guren asked.

The sound of howling could still be heard.

The howling from the students.

The students who enjoyed teasing Guren were now all howling in agony.

“That’s, that’s because……”

“If you lie to me, I’ll immediately kill you. If I feel that you’re lying to me, I’ll also immediately kill you. So, if you want to answer, you better answer properly. Why are you here?”

Saitou looked at Guren.

“Looks like I really have no choice.”

Then he reluctantly closed his eyes. Then in an instant, as he decided, he opened both his eyes widely.

Just as he opened his eyes, the image of a serpent had formed in the centre of his eyes.

A curse.

A curses embedded in his irises.

Guren instinctively took a step back. However,

“Don’t need to retreat.”

It was Shinya. He had already covered Saitou’s eyes with a talisman.

“Alright, all sealed.”

“Ah……”

Saitou let out a strained cry.

Overlooking Saitou, Shinya opened his mouth.

“I’m also interested. Even though I don’t care how the Hiiragi students are treated….. but you don’t have any reason to attack here. With the number of people you have come with, you would have been easily destroyed by the main forces of the『Mikado no Oni』. So why on earth have you come here?”

So he asked.

Saitou finally let out his true pained expression.

“Iyaa, even though you’re still a brat, you’re a bit more powerful than expected….. That’s why I’ve already told the higher ups that one person can’t possibly deal with two……”

However, Guren didn’t wait for him to finish and raised his blade at him.

“Uuh.”

Saitou groaned in pain.

Guren then said.

“Shut up. No more bullshit. Just answer the question.”

“……”

“So why are you here?”

This time, Saitou finally answered honestly.

“Because there is something we want here.”

“Something you want?”

“Yes.”

“So what is it?”

Saitou replied to this question.

“Research data.”

“Research data? That’s……”

“Ah, yes, the easiest way to put it is that one of the students here has been selling secret incantations from Hiiragi House to the «Hyakuya Church»…… So we’re here to conduct an experiment with that student.”

Guren laughed.

Looks like the Hiiragi House has many enemies. The status of the Hiiragi House is not as strong as I thought.

No matter who powerful the organisation is, there will always be people trying to defeat it.

Anyone who isn’t happy with them, there will always be people who will betray them.

Whether that person is myself, or someone else.

“…… Could it be you’re the person betraying the Hiiragi secrets?”

Looking at the person who had just placed a seal on Saitou’s eyes, Guren asked.

Guren only saw Shinya shrugging.

“So about this whole shocking issue, «Hyakuya Church» has never contacted me. Why didn’t you find me~?”

Saitou laughed.

“Because a person more talented than you has already sold us the data.”

Guren was unable to guess who it was from what Saitou had said. This was not surprising as he wasn’t too familiar with the Hiiragi House matters. With the strength and scale of the Ichinose House, it was impossible to fully investigate the Hiiragi House.

Under the agreement to some extent, Ichinose House is overseen by『Mikado no Tsuki』*, which has depended on*『Mikado no Oni』*for its survival. This has always been the status quo.*

So to get this sort of information, it must be someone who has about the same power and capacity as the Hiiragi House, such as the «Hyakuya Church».

So it must be someone from the Hiiragi House?

“……”

Guren threw Shinya a glance.

And saw his expression change. It looked like he had a clue.

“Do you know who it is?”

Guren asked.

But Shinya didn’t reply.

But Guren didn’t need Shinya’s reply. He had other ways of getting his answer.

“Never mind. You answer it, Saitou. There is no need for me to……”

Guren added a bit more pressure to his blade.

“Guh.”

Saitou let out another groan.

Guren looked at him with a scrunched up face and asked.

“….. Enough of this rubbish, answer me. Or I’ll kill you.”

“Ahaha, so scary~! But it doesn’t matter even if you kill me.”

“Ah?”

“I’m saying that my task is almost complete. The experiment and the retrieval of the data is now within our reach. In fact, it should be completed by now. My job was to distract the two people who were most likely to get in the way. And that has been successful. To let myself become an obstacle, to try and let you focus on my body……”

And then suddenly,

“Shit! So that’s it!”

Shinya’s expression changed and he suddenly straightened up. He went straight towards the direction of the smoke.

Guren noticed his departure, then looked at Saitou once again.

By now, Guren had more or less understood the situation.

Because all the information needed to grasp the situation had now surfaced.

· There was someone inside the Hiiragi House who was selling information and engaged in an experiment with «Hyakuya Church».

· That person harboured an intense hatred towards the Hiiragi House.

· In order to get to this person, they had to stop the two people most likely to get in the way——Guren and Shinya.

With all this information, even an idiot would be able to figure it out.

So Guren said a name.

“…… That traitor, it’s Mahiru, isn’t it?”

Saitou raised his head to look at Guren.

“Ah, you’re a lot calmer about it than I expected.”

“Why would I lie about it?”

“Because Mahiru-san is your lover, is she not?”

But Guren laughed in response.

“I’m not stupid enough to make a woman I haven’t seen in ten years my lover.”

“Ahaha, I see.”

“Exactly.”

“But there’s still an attachment, no?”

“No.”

“No no, there is. The fact that your power——is at a much higher level for someone your age, is all because to rescue Mahiru-san from the Hiiragi House……”

Guren thrust his sword even deeper into Saitou’s chest and said.

“I already said there isn’t.”

“Haha, is that so? Well forget it, it doesn’t matter now. But it seems that Mahiru-san still likes you a great lot.”

“……”

“Just to return to your side, she honed her skills and betrayed her family. What a determined person, eh? In her heart she’s always wanted to see you, these ten years couldn’t have been easy for her to bear.”

“……”

“Can’t you just accept her already? I’m sure Mahiru-san really wishes to be embraced by you.”

Saitou continued to talk.

Guren thought about what happened that day in the sick bay, where he met with Mahiru.

Her face was filled with joy.

Seeing how Guren had no single redeeming point——thinking about how she couldn't forget over the last ten years, she had a look of disappointment on her face.

Still, her face has been praised as beautiful, her happy and sweet face.

"So, the «Hyakuya Church» is going to help us?"

Saitou smiled and nodded.

"Of course, that was the intention. Both your strengths will be very well-received. Of course——this means that the Hiiragi House and Ichinose House will be under our control."

"……"

"But, if we manage to really defeat the Hiiragi House, then you and Mahiru-san can sort it out, you can become the king and queen if you wanted. We won't interfere in this respect. As long as you want it, you can be free to love her or do whatever you want."

So Saitou had said.

Guren lowered his head and looked at Saitou.

Saitou still had the same smile plastered on his face. Even with half his chest opened, and half his body already food for the blade, he still smiled with ease.

Staring at his smiling face,

"So you're saying, this has been your job so far?"

Guren had asked.

At this, Saitou still smiled and replied.

"Yes, exactly. To persuade you, that has always been my responsibility."

"Then, the one who convinced Mahiru……"

"Was me. Mahiru-san said that she still likes you. She wanted to be together with you. She said to achieve this, she was willing to do anything, even betray her own family."

"……"

"So, Ichinose Guren-sama. What do you think of it? We can go together to where Mahiru-san is……"

Then, from outside the smoke, an explosion could be heard.

At this time, all the students were shouting.

"The main troops from 『Mikado no Oni』 have come!"

"Fina—finally we're saved!"

"Kill them! Destroy them all! Let them regret they ever messed with 『Mikado no Oni』!"

There were shouts after shouts.

Then suddenly from the other direction,

"Ma—Mahiru-sama has been captured!"

"Quick save her! Even if you have to sacrifice your life, we have to save Mahiru-sama…… Gyaaaaaaaaaaaa!"

The farce still continued.

All according to «Hyakuya Church»'s plan.

Of course, Mahiru does not intend to reveal the fact that she has betrayed the Hiiragi House. She has to pretend to be kidnapped in order to escape. That being said, it seems that she isn't planning on returning.

Saitou opened his mouth and spoke.

"Aah, there already isn't much time left. I don't want to expose «Hyakuya Church»'s real plan and we can't possibly defeat the Hiiragi House main troops, so we have to retreat."

"Ha, don't want to expose? I'm the……"

"No, because you hate the Hiiragi House, you won't tell them about this, right?"

"……"

"Or, could it be because you actually like Mahiru-san…… So you don't want anything bad to happen to her?"

"……"

"So I'll tell you the meeting point. Tonight you can finally meet with Mahiru-san. If you are willing to show up, then «Hyakuya Church» will agree to welcome you as the hero who defeated the Hiiragi House."

"……"

"Now then, can you now pull out your sword that's lodged in my chest? So that I can help you reunite with Mahiru-san after ten years."

Guren glared at Saitou.

Saitou was still smiling.

Guren's head was filled with many thoughts.

Now that he has revealed this, what should I do about it? How do I look at the situation and decide how much of Saitou's words to believe?

There isn't much time.

If I accept Saitou's proposal, then I have to let Saitou go in front of the『Mikado no Oni』*main troops. If I let this bastard get captured by*『Mikado no Oni』*, the Ichinose House won't be able to intervene.*

So Guren quickly considered his options.

What should I do?

What would be the right *thing to do?*

No, what exactly *do I want?*

Then, Guren opened his mouth.

"To be honest, I feel really uncomfortable. To be played like a fool just the same."

Guren let out a smile, he pushed the sword in deeper.

"Guh."

Saitou howled.

But Guren didn't care and continued.

"So that's why I'm not planning to let you go. I'll capture you and get all the information out of you."

This time, Saitou opened his mouth to speak.

"In that case, Mahiru-san would……"

"If you're tortured, you'll then tell the truth."

"Haha, even if I'm tortured, I won't say anything. Because I've already been tortured. Also, my brain has been altered so that if I reveal anything, I'll immediately die.

“Eh, is that so? Then just die.”

This time, Saitou appeared a little more anxious. He looked at Guren,

“…… If that’s the case, then you will never be able to see Mahiru-san again……”

“It doesn’t matter. You seem to have misunderstood, I didn’t become strong because of her……”

Then the following words were heard,

“Don’t say such cruel things.”

A voice.

A girl’s voice.

In an instant, Guren withdrew his sword from Saitou’s chest. Then he quickly jumped back.

Because in front of him he could feel a strong killing aura. As if to tell him that if he didn’t step back, he would die for sure.

But the killing aura followed. Now it was pressed against Guren’s back.

Guren quickly pointed his sword at this aura.

Then he heard a “ding”, the sharp sound of clashing metal.

Guren looked in front of him.

Then out of nowhere a beautiful girl appeared.

Long flowing grey hair.

A dignified look.

Pink lips.

It was Mahiru.

Hiiragi Mahiru was standing right in front.

In her hands was a jet black Japanese sword.

Holding his blade, Guren looked up.

“…… Mahiru?”

And called out her name.

Then, Mahiru laughed. For some reason, it was almost as if she was happier, her expression more lively.

“Ah, so you’ve dropped the polite speech…… Not like when we were at the sick bay.”

“Ha, I don’t have to when talking to the traitor of the Hiiragi House. Also, my power has been exposed.”

At this, Mahiru smiled happily at Guren and nodded.

“So it has…… After all, there are only a few who can block my sword.”

Mahiru relaxed her stance. Her power wasn’t like a small girl’s. It wasn’t even human. Whether it was because of the amplification of the curse itself or some other power. Guren smiled.

“Ah yes maybe. Maybe we should fight to see who is stronger.”

Despite this, Guren took a step back.

Releasing his sword from Mahiru, he attacked with another strike.

In an instant, two swords clashed.

But, Mahiru’s sword was fast.

Stronger and faster than Guren.

But Guren was more skilled in sword work. So they were evenly matched.

But,

“Sh—shit….. is this for real?”

Guren was slowly being overwhelmed.

After clashing swords, Guren gradually stepped back.

“Aha, what’s this? I thought you said you wanted to fight? To see who is stronger?”

“…… You, don’t be so proud.”

At this point, Guren suddenly took a step back. His hands stretched out, ready to throw out another talisman.

Mahiru’s response,

“Ah, so you admit that you can’t defeat me.”

“You talk too much.”

But Guren hadn’t pulled out his talisman. It was just a decoy. He pulled out his whole sword.

“Wah wah wah.”

Mahiru hurried to defend herself, but it was too late. Guren had driven his real sword straight through Mahiru’s heart, however,

“……”

At that moment, his sword stopped.

Mahiru looked down at the sword and laughed.

“So powerful…… You’ve really become stronger, Guren. Was it because of me?”

But Guren withdrew his sword and said.

“No.”

“Ah, no?”

“Aah, no. Don’t make me repeat myself.”

Mahiru was not pleased and bit her lip. Guren had seen this expression before. When they were younger, he had seen it on several occasions. Mahiru had always asked if Guren liked her, and when he had always evaded her questions, she would have that expression on her face.

Then she looked at Guren.

“Really……? The reason why I became stronger was because I wanted to be with Guren.”

She said so in a pitiful voice.

But, Guren still stared at her.

“So that was why you cooperated with «Hyakuya Church», to start a war?

He asked.

In the meantime, the howling continued to surround them.

The sound of war had not stopped.

The sound of fighting between the main troops from 『Mikado no Oni』 and «Hyakuya Church» continued to ring through.

The sound of killing.

Amongst the cries of the students’ agony——Mahiru still laughed, so pleasantly and flirtatiously.

“Fu, fufu…… Once you have the power, it becomes very enjoyable. Isn’t that how you feel, Guren? To let your body become so strong like now you have to be completely immersed in it.”

“……”

“But the physical body has a limit. I can’t reach a higher level with this.”

“…… Higher? What do you mean?”

Guren asked. Mahiru raised the sword with her right hand and said.

Her eyes narrowed slightly,

“As I said, higher.”

Then, she struck her sword down.

The sword immediately emitted a black light. A normal sword would just break if it was struck down like that.

Then, the ground suddenly split. The ground was divided into the two. The crack had extended all the way to the other side of the smoke.

This power can’t be regarded as human.

If Mahiru had actually used her real power the first time, I’m sure I would have been dead.

Mahiru looked at Guren and smiled.

“Ah, are you scared? This weapon is called «Kiju»*. This is pretty powerful, isn’t it? This is created from combining the Hiiragi and «Hyakuya Church» incantations. It allows me to enter into a contract with the «Demon» that has so far eluded us……”

Guren had already heard enough.

Guren had heard about «Kiju».

The so-called «Kiju» is the most difficult to use amongst all the spells.

It can directly call upon the soul of a Shinki or Kokki* and then seal it into an artefact, such as a weapon.*

The seal can be a number of weapons.

Sword.

Axe.

Bow and arrow among others.

The weapon that seals the «Demon» has to go through years of sacrifice and purification to be able to be used.

However, all this is only theory, modern science hasn’t been able to realise this yet.

No, even if it is possible to achieve this, it would take tens of millions of human trials.

With the current incantations, the «Demon» cannot be completely sealed in a weapon, the weapon’s user would be occupied by the «Demon» leading to disaster.

Then, once they become devoured by the «Demon», all rationality, memory, everything will be lost, and they will just become cannibals that will only get pleasure from eating humans.

There, this is called the «Kiju» incantation. At least in the Ichinose House, this type of research is banned. Of course, the Ichinose House does not have enough technical and financial resources to study it anyway.

And here she is holding the sealed «Kiju» weapon.

But she still looks like a human.

Guren asked.

“…… So you have completed the «Kiju»?”

Majiru laughed after hearing this and replied.

“Ah, are you interested? In this new powerful weapon?”

“Just answer me.”

“Aha, alright.”

Mahiru raised her sword and said.

“I guess I can say that it’s *almost* done. But, Guren. Even with just this, I’m already undefeatable, right?”

“……”

“Even the Hiiragi House or anyone else can’t defeat it.”

“……”

“Even the vampires who view humans as livestock, I can also kill them all. If I can complete this, as long as I can complete this……”

This time, Guren replied.

“Ha, you’ve gone mad. Because of this, you’re willing to sacrifice others? Because of this experiment, how many have become offerings?

Hearing this, Mahiru looked at Guren and said.

“Ah, aren’t you being a bit hypocritical? As if you have never made any similar sacrifices…… You have got to be kidding? In order to get this strong, I think you must have also given up something.”

“……”

“Wasn’t this what we agreed to that day? Under the blue sky, on the green grass. How can you protect something if you don’t have power? Even the people you care about, you cannot protect. Even the important things, you cannot protect. That’s why you need power. Me too, you too……. Right, Guren?”

Then, she reached out her hand to Guren.

And said.

“Why don’t you come with me? If you do, you can also become this powerful. With me together, to make this power complete……. To make it…… complete.”

Then suddenly her words were interrupted.

Mahiru suddenly clutched her chest in pain.

Her tone had changed.

It became tender and tearful.

“Don’t… don’t come here, Guren. I’m already…… I’m already swallowed by the…… «Kiju». It, it was a failure…… I, I’m already, not…… shut up, shut up! I’m not swallowed up yet! I still have a lot more power…… A whole lot more power……”

She was talking chaotically.

Suddenly, Mahiru’s right hand shook.

It started to tremble and shake.

Then, from her black blade, a black object appeared and moved towards Mahiru’s arm.

It was like a curse.

Almost wanting to curse Mahiru herself, the blade began to erode her real arm. Then the wrist started to become deformed. Her fingernails grew longer, almost as if turning her into a monster.

“Oh! This is not good.”

Standing at the side, Saitou called out.

He released his chain again and wrapped it around Mahiru's wrist.

"Oops, you've dawdled too long. Let's call it a day, Mahiru-san. You still can't use this weapon for a long time."

After hearing this, Mahiru's expression on her face recovered.

She returned to her calm face.

"…… Eh, that's right. Let's go back."

But this time Guren glared at Saitou.

"Bastard, what have you done with Mahiru?"

He asked Saitou.

"If you really want to understand, then you should join «Hyakuya Church»."

But Guren dismissed it.

"I'm asking you, what the hell did you do to Mahiru!?"

Guren sped towards Saitou. He raised his crimson red sword, wanting to cut down Saitou.

But, Mahiru blocked it.

She stood in front of Saitou, holding up her black sword.

The crimson blade and the jet black blade instantly attacked each other.

But this time, there wasn't a sound of clashing metal.

Guren's sword, Kujakumaru, broke.

The blade with the «Kiju» curse placed upon it stopped just before it struck Guren's neck.

Obviously, Guren's head would have been cut off, but Mahiru stopped the sword and said.

"Let's call this even. Because you didn't kill me just now. Even though if you had pierced my heart, I still wouldn't die."

What is she saying?

Even if I pierce her heart, she won't die? ——That's not human at all.

However, Guren looked down at the sword pointed at his neck.

"…… Even if you cut off my neck, I also won't die."

"Ahaha. That's impossible. Because you are still human. But, Guren, you're still so interesting."

"I am not interesting."

"Fufufu. Ne, Guren."

"What?"

"I really like you."

Then she hugged Guren. She straightened her back, with her hands clasped around Guren's neck. She was so close to him that her breathing and heartbeat could be heard clearly.

This sound, it's exactly the same as before.

Lying on the grass.

Looking up at the sky.

However, the situation is completely different.

It has become annoyingly completely different.

Mahiru let go of Guren.

She stared at him and asked,

"I'm going to ask you again, Guren. Do you want to come together with me?"

Guren replied.

"No."

"You will gain more power."

"Not interested."

"Ahaha. It looks like Guren really hates me now."

She sounded a little sad.

However, Guren replied,

"That's not the problem. The power I seek is not the same as yours."

"Really?"

“Really.”

“Alright…… But when did we become this different?”

The answer was impossible to find out. Because it had been ten years. In the last ten years, two people both have experienced many things. Maybe in those ten years, some things happened that changed the course of the future forever.

Whether a happy or sad thing, it would be impossible to find out.

But, at least Mahiru appeared really sad.

She said.

“….. Hey Guren, I’ll let you in on a secret.”

Saitou reacted nervously.

“Mahiru-san. That matter……”

“This year at Christmas, the world will experience a disaster.”

“Ah?”

“The horn of the apocalypse will sound and the virus will spread. The world will definitely need more power than what it has now. That way, you will be sure…… you will be sure to need me. Until that time comes, farewell.”

“Mahiru, you, what are you saying……?”

But Mahiru didn’t want to answer any more questions. She tiptoed and twirled backwards.

She smiled sweetly, and again,

“I like you, Guren.”

She said.

“This is my true feeling. So, I will always wait…… always wait for the day you need me again.”

Then, she disappeared into the other side of the smoke.

Saitou looked a little tired.

“Looks like the plan was disrupted quite a bit. But, it wasn’t that big of a deal. Ah, if you still want to get in touch with «Hyakuya Church», then you can speak with the Director of the orphanage where that boy you saw that day was from. Hyakuya Orphanage——you know the place right?”

“……”

“You can contact me that way. Alright, I shall take my leave now.”

With that, Saitou left.

There was only Guren left in the smoke.

He stared at the smoke where Mahiru had disappeared into. She was already long gone, but he continued to stare straight on. Then he looked at his hands that held his broken blade.

The blade of the Kujakumaru was forged by powerful incantations made from the birth of the Vidya-Raja. It was definitely not the type of blade to be so easily broken like that.

But,

“It ended up breaking into two…… what on earth is that power?”

Guren muttered in shock.

No, to be honest, he still hadn’t figured what exactly had just happened.

What the hell is Mahiru planning?

Looks like something will happen on Christmas Day.

The «Kiju» weapon is really powerful.

Its power is really unfathomable.

“Shit, this really pisses me off.”

Guren frowned like a dissatisfied child.

The smoke was beginning to dissipate. It seemed that a spell was used to keep up the smoke cover.

So the «Hyakuya Church» troops had also retreated as the smoke disappeared.

Then,

“……”

The disappearance of the smoke had revealed the situation before him, it was really like hell.

The vast practice ground was filled with the stains of blood.

Injured students.

A girl who was crying by herself.

A boy who was standing, lost.

Another boy who was performing CPR on a corpse who had been dead for a long time.

The bodies of students.

The bodies of teachers.

It was a sea of blood.

There were no corpses with black suits in sight. The students who constantly teased Guren couldn’t even defeat the assassins from «Hyakuya Church».

Or «Hyakuya Church» did not leave any corpses behind to be identified.

But whatever it was, this battle fought on the Hiiragi home front was a complete defeat.

Because the Hiiragi House did not even know the true aims of their enemy and still let all their enemies escape. It was a sad sight.

“…… Those people really have a lot to deal with……”

Then Guren heard a female voice.

“You, you……. You’re still alive?”

He turned his head. It was Juujou Mito. But, she was all covered in blood.

Though it wasn’t sure whether it was her blood or the blood of others.

Guren looked at Mito and said.

“The blood on your body……”

Isn’t yours right?

Was what Guren wanted to say, but Mito ignored his words and ran towards him. Not knowing why, but she started crying in Guren’s arms.

“That’s, that’s really great! It’s great that you’re still alive!”

Mito yelled out. Her whole body was shaking. Her weak body kept trembling.

“Every, everyone is dead…… I tried desperately to save them but…… everyone, everyone……”

Guren didn't know how to reply. He felt very awkward. Then in order to let Mito calm down, he gently hugged her shoulders.

Mito calmed down a little. So Guren asked.

"Calm down. Then answer my question."

"Eh……"

"Are you injured? It could be that you're in a state of shock that you don't notice the pain."

Mito shook her head.

"No, no, I'm fine. I didn't get hurt badly."

"Good. Then that's good."

"But, but, everyone…… all the students…… and myself……. I also…… If you hadn't pushed me aside, then I would also have been blown apart by the explosion."

Saying this, her face became distorted with fear. She was still in a deep embrace in Guren's arms.

At this time,

"I say, when did you two become this close?"

A surprised voice.

It was Goshi.

They looked towards the direction of the voice. There was a blood man standing there watching with a cynical look on his face.

Mito saw him and,

"Goshi! You're still alive!"

Mito exclaimed excitedly.

Goshi opened up his arms and said,

"Ah, so this is how you get to be so close to the girls? Then, come here, come here."

Goshi said this but for some reason, Mito didn't throw herself into Goshi's arms.

Goshi looked at Guren, unsatisfied.

"This is really unfair treatment. What do you think of it, Guren?"

"Hmph. I'm more suspicious by the fact that you're suddenly on first name basis with me."

"Naaah, well~ nothing much. If you hadn't saved me just now, I would already be dead. So you're sort of like my saviour."

"Then you call all your saviours by their first names?"

"Because you have so few friends, shouldn't you be happy about it?"

"Go and die."

"Ahaha. Alright, I won't joke around. Now the situation has really become ridiculous."

Goshi looked around him.

He could see the bodies of all his schoolmates.

All of them covered in blood.

Although the main troops from『Mikado no Oni』had arrived and began rescuing the wounded, but the practice ground was still in chaos.

"Who would have thought that this would happen in the middle of Shibuya?"

Goshi asked. Then turned to face Guren.

“Hey, you’ve always said you were really weak, and yet you still survived?”

Suddenly, Mito left Guren’s embrace and nodded her head.

“How on earth did you dodge that black suit’s chains?”

It seems that the guys from «Hyakuya Church» were also attacking wantonly outside the smoke screen.

Guren replied.

“….. Ah~ that, that’s because…… I was squatting down the whole time.”

“Eh?”

“Hah?”

Both Mito and Goshi said at the same time.

Then Guren began to explain.

“So as I was saying, I was squatting the whole time and didn’t move at all, before I knew it, it was over.”

Mito looked at Guren with a look of shock on her face, then she turned to Goshi before bursting into laughter.

“Are you seriously……”

“Even then, this guy still could sense the first explosion.”

Guren shrugged his shoulders,

“I saw it because I just happened to look up at the sky.”

Both Goshi and Mito laughed at his explanation.

But their laughter was not one of contempt. Maybe it was because the adrenaline had died down that they were now relaxed enough to be able to laugh.

They laughed until they wanted to cry, then stopped.

Goshi looked at all the injured students around him and said.

“…… But, this is really not the time to laugh.”

Mito nodded her head.

“Mm.”

“We may take a moment of silence for our fallen classmates, but we can’t remain docile.”

“…… Mm.”

“We have to take revenge for them.”

Goshi said. And Mito once again,

“Mm.”

And nodded her head.

Guren looked at these two, deep in thought.

Revenge? ——But who on earth is the target of their revenge?

«Hyakuya Church»?

Or the one who caused all this, Mahiru?

Then suddenly, Guren thought of a younger Mahiru.

Thinking about his childhood, it was as though he could smile without a care in the world.

——*Ne, Guren.*

She always happily called out his name.

——*So…… Can we……. Can we get married?*

She asked cheerfully.

——*So that we can be together forever, like how we are now?*

Guren raised his head.

Standing in the middle of the blood-soaked practice ground, he looked up and saw the usual blue, cloudless sky.

However, his mood had already spiralled down.

Feeling as though he was stifled by depressive feelings.

“Guren.”

Someone called out to him.

It was Shinya.

That guy is still alive.

Guren looked at Shinya.

Shinya was soaked in blood. He looked at Guren sullenly and said.

“Mahiru…… Mahiru is gone.”

“……”

“It seems she was taken away.”

Even though he knows that the true traitor is Mahiru, he still doesn’t say it. It must mean that he really hates the Hiiragi House. It looks like he is serious about defeating the Hiiragi House.

Then,

“So, what are you going to do now?”

Guren didn’t know how to reply to this question. So many things had happened. He had no energy to explain himself.

So Guren replied.

“Why do you have to inform me about the matters of your fiancé, Mahiru-sama?”

Shinya’s eyes widened in shock. Then he noticed that Mito and Goshi were standing next to Guren, so he changed his expression, as if asking Guren whether he was planning to keep up this charade.

“…… You.”

He opened his mouth, then Guren laughed in reply.

“Are you angry?”

“…… You should really stop this if I already know.”

“Haha. No, but I’m very tired. Let’s talk about it later.”

Shinya stared at Guren.

“Is there still time later?”

Guren pointed to all the corpses on the ground.

“’Is there still time?’ I think we’re already too late.”

No, we need to attack the enemy head on, but we will need time to prepare. We need to consider every strategy and gather all

the intelligence in order to be fully prepared.

Regarding this, we're already way behind «Hyakuya Church» and Mahiru who had already long completed their preparations.

Shinya nodded his head.

"If that's what you believe, then alright."

And said.

Shinya turned around and walked off.

This time, Goshi,

"What was that about?"

At this, Guren cocked his head.

"Who knows what?"

"I'm talking about Mahiru-sama getting captured. Is it true? Would there be any danger?"

Goshi opened his mouth to speak, but Guren was already unable to listen.

The sky was blue.

It was an absolute vastness of blue.

The wind was slowly blowing in the clouds.

Guren looked up,

"The war…… it has already started."

He said emotionlessly, just a faint whisper.

* Kujaku means peacock

* Kiju = The literal meaning of the kanji is “Demon Curse”

* Shinki = The literal meaning of the kanji is “God Demon”

* Kokki = The literal meaning of the kanji is “Black Demon”

Epilogue – About the Spring before the Destruction——

“Guren-sama, Guren-sama, from today’s school reopening onwards, I swear to never leave Guren-sama’s side again!”

“……”

“I didn’t expect that on my second day of being at the hospital that Guren-sama would end up fighting in a battle. When I heard about the news, Yuki-chan and I looked at each other and jumped up in shock. We were meant to be by your side to protect you, but we ended up leaving you in the middle of danger, what on earth were we doing! Um, so……”

Sayuri said as she stuck closely to Guren.

Shigure was also standing closely on the other side and said.

“So we have decided that from today onwards, we will never leave Guren-sama’s side even for a moment.”

Guren who was in between the two wearing the sailor school uniforms, looked down and said.

“But you don’t have to stick to me this closely.”

Shigure opened her mouth.

“But just in case……”

Sayuri also spoke.

“Since the battle……”

Guren put his hands on both their shoulders and pushed them apart as though opening a door.

“You’re in the way. I can’t even walk properly. And also, you two are actually weaker than me.”

But Shigure continued,

“It is true our strength definitely cannot beat Guren-sama’s. But we can at least fend off the attack for you, so please don’t leave our side.”

They looked around them. Checking out for any enemies. Whether anyone would suddenly attack. They wouldn’t let off anyone who looked even just a little bit suspicious. The two of them were so nervous that they almost looked crazy.

Yes, we’re now walking along the usual route to school.

Towards First Shibuya High School.

A group of unknown assailants attacked the school during the sorcery selection examination——since then, after two weeks of closure, the school finally reopens.

The group who attacked the school was a little known terrorist group——or so what I’ve heard.

『Mikado no Oni』*had reported that they had since killed all the members of that terrorist group and issued a statement that the same fate will befall all those who tried to attack them.*

So, everyone at school was reassured. The followers of 『Mikado no Oni』 *had their anxieties erased.*

Of course, this is a complete lie.

The biggest sorcery organisation《Hyakuya Church》*who attacked the school isn’t a target that the* 『Mikado no Oni』*can easily eliminate.*

It could be that the so-called terrorist group was fabricated by 《Hyakuya Church》*, or it could also be made up by the* 『Mikado no Oni』*as they didn’t want to look as though they had made a blunder——as for which is true, I have no idea.*

But no matter what, the situation isn't going to just improve.

Because the war between the country's two biggest sorcery organisations had started.

In this situation, Ichinose House of the 『Mikado no Tsuki』 *will definitely be the victor in the war between these two. Standing on the sidelines, waiting for these two groups to destroy each other before taking over.*

Suddenly, the two biggest sorcery organisations started fighting each other——information had not been disseminated to others apart from the executives. On the surface, it looked like there was tight control of information, but underneath it all, a fierce intelligence war had already begun.

Agents from the two organisations were desperately trying their best to not to be in a passive position against the enemy.

Then,

"…… I'll definitely never let any harm come to Guren-sama again!"

Shigure said, determined to make her voice firm.

Just then, an enemy suddenly attacked.

Though, it was really nothing threatening.

"…… Um?"

Guren looked up.

A Coca-Cola bottle was aimed at him with the cap still intact. If it was broken, it would soak Guren.

This was the exact same situation as the first day of school.

There were a group of 『Mikado no Oni』 students across from Guren, laughing at him viciously.

During this war——those who weren't even informed of the war, those who just blatantly accepted the fabricated terrorist group excuse, those bunch of overconfident idiots——they just kept laughing with their silly faces.

Guren squinted his eyes,

"Shigure, don't interfere."

And said.

There is no need to reveal my strength here. No, I should say that now more than ever I should hide my strength.

After all, maybe I don't need to be patient for another three years.

After all, the war had already started.

The two strongest organisations I've always wanted to get rid of have already started destroying each other.

So, I still have to endure this humiliation.

Continue to endure until the limit.

Those idiots who——

Those arrogant self-righteous idiots, let those who take pleasure in looking down on the Ichinose House quickly go to hell.

So Guren was prepared to tolerate the bottle being thrown at him.

He also saw that Shigure had already reacted. She was always very wary. Anything that was near Guren, especially anything hostile, she already had a kunai ready to attack it.

Shigure then threw her kunai, aiming straight at the bottle.

And if the bottle is destroyed mid-flight, those students will definitely shut up. They will realise Shigure's fury, and see her real strength.

But this is all meaningless.

It doesn't do any good.

I think I better give her a lecture later.

Then, at this time,

"Yo!"

Guren heard a voice.

The kunai that was flying through the air had been caught by the boy who just appeared out of nowhere.

Guren knew it was Hiiragi Shinya.

At the same time, because the kunai didn't hit the bottle, it continued its trajectory. And hit Guren right on his head, soaking him from head to toe.

Seeing this, the students who threw the bottle burst into laughter.

"He's completely drenched in coke!"

"Weakling, don't come to our school!"

"Get out of here, a rat from the Ichinose House is not fit to be here!"

The mocking didn't stop.

Finally, Shinya turned to look at him. A smile formed on his lips,

"Oh. I see you're still the same, eh? You can't even dodge a coke bottle."

At this, the students laughed again. With Shinya from the Hiiragi House as support, the students became more and more daring.

It looked like Shinya was helping Guren continue his charade.

"Bastard."

Guren stopped the fuming Sayuri and Shigure and said to Shinya.

"Thank you for your help."

"Naaah, we're all comrades, right?"

"Comrades? You mean you're planning on joining the 『Mikado no Tsuki』?"

"Whoever said that?"

"Then we are not comrades."

"Fufu, well, but we are fighting the same enemy, so we should try our best to work together. Alright then, meet you back in the classroom……"

Shinya said then turned around and walked off.

Shigure wanted to find out what was going on, but her sight was blocked by another person,

"Hang on, how on earth did you get this wet?"

Another voice from behind.

It was Juujou Mito.

It seemed like she wanted to protect Guren from the students who threw the bottle at him as she stood in front of him.

"Seriously you all, doing something like this? Aren't you ashamed of yourselves?"

She said emphatically.

The students around started getting a little nervous,

"That hair colour…… it's someone from Juujou House……"

“Oi, oi, this doesn’t look too good. That guy from the Ichinose House actually got someone from Juujou House on his side……”

“Don’t be like that! We still have Shinya-sama!”

“Also, Seishirou-sama really hates that Ichinose rat……”

Even though it didn’t really matter to Guren, in the middle of the bullies vs. those against the bullies fight, another appeared,

“Uwa, that sucks. What the hell happened to you, Guren?”

Goshi Norito has appeared.

He looked at Guren,

“Why do you smell of coke?”

“I like coke.”

“Haha, what are you talking about? Seriously, are you being bullied? By who? Since you saved me, shall I return the favour?”

Goshi said as he looked at all the students around.

Also, all those students,

“Heh!”

Gasped and lowered their heads, and started walking away.

“Quick, quick let’s go to school!”

“We’re gonna be late!”

One by one, all of them found an excuse to leave.

At this,

“……”

Guren stared blankly, then said to Mito and Goshi who helped him.

“Wait, I have something I want to tell you.”

Goshi asked in return.

“Oh, what is it? You want to thank us?”

Mito said,

“You don’t need to thank us, since you’ve already saved us once.”

Guren nodded his head and said.

“Why do I have to thank you? I’ve said before, leave me alone. I don’t need any friends.”

Hearing this, Mito and Goshi widened their eyes, then,

“As I’ve said, you’re really a shy guy~”

Goshi laughed.

Mito laughed too,

“What? You’re worried that we’ll be bullied because we’re around you?”

“Ah? That’s not……”

“You don’t need to worry too much. But it seems that I’m beginning to understand you a bit more.”

It appeared that she had no idea what was going on and had a look of complete misunderstanding on her face.

Then Mito said to Shigure.

“Ah, Yukimi-san.”

“…… I am not interested in you.”

“Yukimi-san, why don’t you come to my house and play next time? I mentioned you to my father and he became very interested……”

“…… I am not interested.”

“How about you come to my place after school today……?”

On the other side, Goshi found someone else to harass.

“Hey hey hey, you’re called Sayuri right? So, you, do you have a boyfriend?”

“Wa—waitwaitwaitwaitwait a minute, why on earth are you so close to me? Do you want me to kill you?”

“If you don’t have a boyfriend, we should meet after school for a date……”

“I don’t want to meet up with you!”

“So you’re saying that you already have a boyfriend? Is that it?”

“Eh, ah, no, I don’t have a boyfriend….. But to me, the most important is my master……”

Sayuri’s face was completely flushed, her eyes couldn’t stop glancing over at Guren.

“……”

So just to confirm once again, this is definitely wartime.

Then,

“These easy-going idiots, what on earth seriously?”

Guren thought.

But, idiots will always keep arguing. Even if you try to shut them up, it will go in one ear and out the other.

Looking at the scene before him, Guren sighed and slicked back his cola-drenched hair.

He raised his head to the sky.

Looking at the peaceful calm sky, as well as the ridiculously naïve scene in front of him,

“…… Haha.”

Guren let out a small smile.

So, it seems the story starts from here.

War.

Killing one another.

Intrigue.

Love, and hate.

From start to finish, it is all accompanied by people’s feelings.

With desire as the source, a continuous cycle.

Endless.

And the desire continues to grow, leading to the destruction of the world.

This is the story of what happens to the humans before their extinction.

The Seraph of the End has sounded its final trumpet, before the world's destruction, because humans are that ugly, how they struggle in despair, the story——

Afterword

School magic fantasy! This is what is written on the book's band.

This is sort of what the book is about I suppose.

Also, I've already written about the end of the world once. Writing about the end of the world——I've always thought it's very interesting, so I had a lot of fun writing this——

But before that, because I've just joined this label, I feel I still have to make an introduction.

I am Kagami Takaya.

My other works include『Densetsu no Yūsha no Densetsu』and『Itsuka Tenma no Kuro Usagi』.

Whenever I start writing a series, I tend to make it very long, so it will take me a while before I start a new one.

This is also the first time I'm publishing something outside of Fujimi Fantasia Bunko, so I'm a little nervous.

I will make every effort to write a good story, so thank you for your valuable time!

Moving on, I wanted to say a few words about this light novel.

I think some readers must have already noticed this in the book bands or advertisements.

Right now, the comic magazine Jump SQ is serialising『Owari no Seraph』at the same time.

Also, the first volumes of the light novel and comic will be released at the same time. (I am also responsible for the script for the comic, so I hope everyone will like it!)

The comic is what happens eight years after the events of the light novel——set in the world after its destruction.

Also, in the comic, Guren is 24 years old.

Already an adult! (lol)

Lieutenant Colonel Ichinose Guren of the Japanese Imperial Demon Army——with his position, he's super active in the comic, hope everyone will like it!

In the comic, the world had already been destroyed eight years ago.

Demons and monsters run amok, vampires rule the world, and the human population is only a tenth of what it used to be.

So in other words, the destruction of the world failed.

But was that all that really happened?

What struggles did humanity go through?

What happened to humanity?

How did Guren and gang react to all of it?

From Guren's perspective, this is humanity's final story——This is what I want to portray.

So, if the light novel and comic are to everyone's liking, then I'll be very happy.

Of course, the protagonists from the two are different (the protagonist in the comic is called Hyakuya Yuuichirou), the concepts in the stories are also different, so even if you just read one, it wouldn't matter.

But of course, I really hope everyone will read both! Everyone, thank you for your support!

I also want to say a few words to the comic readers.

The comic's protagonist Yuuchirou is the same age as Guren in the light novel, both 15 years old! (lol)

Alright, after reading all the Owari no Seraph works, you can check out Fantasia Bunko's『Densetsu no Yūsha no Densetsu』. I'm not sure if Fujimi will get angry if I say this after leaving Fantasia Bunko.

Let's finish this up here.

What I'm going to say next is what I always say whenever a new series gets released, so I'm afraid some of the readers of my others works will get bored, but nonetheless, I will still say it.

I've always felt that I'm creating my works with everyone. When people fall in love with the work, it has a chance to be continued. So this is why firstly I want to thank those who are currently reading this book. It is because of your support that I can continue writing.

I'm so thankful to everyone!

So how will the world that Guren, Sayuri, Shigure, Shinya, and Mahiru live in look like next time? Everyone, please stay tuned for it!

I’ve written so much only to find out I’ve already taken up most of the space in the afterword~!

The next time we’ll meet again will be in the comic!

Basically, each Jump SQ which goes on sale on the fourth of every month publishes the comic『Owari no Seraph』, Ichinose Guren is very active, so I will hope everyone will give me feedback~!

Alright, I’ll finish up here.

Everyone, thank you for your support!

Kagami Takaya